Templates of Ethnographic Writing in Organization Studies: Beyond the
Hegemony of the Detective Story
Peer-reviewed author version

Templates of Ethnographic Writing in Organization Studies:

Beyond the Hegemony of the Detective Story

Tammar B. Zilber
The Jerusalem School of Business,
Hebrew University of Jerusalem
Mount Scopus, Jerusalem 9190501 ISRAEL
TZilber@huji.ac.il
+072-2-5883898

Patrizia Zanoni
Faculty of Business Economics
Hasselt University
Martelarenlaan 42, 3500, Hasselt, Belgium,
&
Utrecht School of Governance
Utrecht University,
Bijlhouwerstraat 6, 3511 ZC Utrecht, The Netherlands
Patrizia.zanoni@uhasselt.be
+32-11-268672

AUTHORS' BIOS
Tammar B. Zilber (TZilber@huji.ac.il) is located at the Jerusalem School of Business, Hebrew University, Israel. She is interested in the microfoundations of institutions, and how individual-, organizational-, and field-level dynamics involve meanings, emotions, and power relations that construct and maintain institutional realities. Her work is based on qualitative methods, including ethnography, discourse, and narrative analysis.

Patrizia Zanoni (Patrizia.zanoni@uhasselt.be) is affiliated to The Faculty of Business Economics, Hasselt University, Belgium, and the Utrecht School of Governance, Utrecht University, The Netherlands. Drawing on various theoretical traditions, she investigates diversity under capitalism, and increasingly against and beyond it. She works mainly with qualitative methodologies, including ethnography.

Templates of Ethnographic Writing in Organization Studies:

Beyond the Hegemony of the Detective Story

ABSTRACT

Using a translation lens, we explore templates for writing ethnography in Organization Studies and their evolution over time through the analysis of all ethnographic papers published in Administrative Science Quarterly 1956-2018. We found three templates of ethnographic writing. Early ethnographic papers resemble *travelogues,* as they use theory to explain a unique case based on first-hand experiences of the author. Most studies read like *detective stories*, using extensive, quantified data from a case and systematically analyzing it to advance theory. This template has remained predominant over time. Finally, some ethnographic papers read like *post-modern detective stories*, in that they attempt to create knowledge from lived experience, while also hinting at the partiality of this knowledge. This template appeared around the turn of the century but is today rare. The overall low number of ethnographies and the lasting hegemony of the ethnography-as-detective-story template reflect the disciplining of ethnography and constraining knowledge creation in Organization Studies. We conclude by offering some strategies to recover the strengths of templates available in the past to broaden the boundaries of norms for writing ethnography today.

KEYWORDS

Ethnography, Templates, Writing, Knowledge production, Translation, Literary Genres,

Anthropology

Templates of Ethnographic Writing in Organization Studies:

Beyond the Hegemony of the Detective Story

As this Feature Topic attest, qualitative researchers in our discipline are concerned that the richness and variety of qualitative methodologies are channeled into a limited array of legitimate templates (e.g., Bansal, Smith, & Vaara, 2018; Cornelissen, 2017; Gephart, 2004; Harley, 2015). While prior research explored specific textual practices like convincing, theoretical and methodological justifications, and building on prior work (e.g. Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993; Golden-Biddle, Locke, & Reay, 2006; Locke & Golden-Biddle, 1997; Welch, Plakoyiannaki, Pickkari, & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2013), we are still missing empirical studies that explore templates for writing whole qualitative papers.

In this paper, we attempt to contribute to the conversation on templates – patterns made of various materials to be used for making many copies of a shape (Cambridge Dictionary, 2019) – in qualitative research through an empirical investigation of the writing of ethnography within Organization Studies (OS) and how it has changed over time. We study ethnography, a central and well-respected method involving the immersion of the researcher in the field for a significant amount of time, exploring the micro-dynamics of social reality from the perspective of the people constructing and living it. More specifically, we focus on writing ethnography (Bate, 1997; Van Maanen, 1988), as to become part of the conversation, an ethnography needs not only to be carried out well in the field, but also to be convincingly written (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993; Van Maanen, 1988). Our study of templates of ethnographic writing is inspired by Van Mannen's seminal work (1988) on the most common ways to write ethnography, distinguishing multiple "tales of the field." Like genres in literary theory, templates for

ethnographic writing are not merely different ways of representation, but also categories of "labour and production" (Ricoeur, 1981, p. 136). They have "performative power" over authors, as they are grounded in a "formative and structuring ideology" that pressures authors into specific subject positions and ways of writing (Alacovska, 2015, p. 130-132). Thus, templates for the writing of ethnography merit our critical attention in themselves.

Different from Van Maanen (1988), however, we ground our typology of templates empirically, using papers published in one journal over time as data. We focus on Administrative Science Quarterly (ASQ) since its inception in 1956 until 2018. We chose ASQ as the most senior premier outlet in our field (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Bachrach, & Podsakoff, 2005; Strang & Siler, 2017), and because it publicly declares its openness to qualitative research (Van Maanen, 1979). US-based, it well represents the more 'mainstream,' highly selective take on ethnography within a field, such as OS, that has historically been dominated by North America (Battilana, Anteby, & Sengul, 2010; Grey, 2010). Taking a translation lens (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996; Sahlin & Wedlin, 2008), and covering six decades, we ask: What can the trends in the prevalence of ethnography and its translation in papers published in ASQ over the past 60+ years tell us about the templates for writing ethnography in OS? How do these templates shape knowledge production in OS? Based on our analysis, we draw lessons on how the challenges faced by current-day ethnographers in our field can be addressed.

We found three templates of ethnographic writing in ASQ, which we termed, drawing on literary genres, ethnography-as-travelogue, ethnography-as-detective-story, and ethnography-as-post-modern-detective-story. Each template has its strengths and weakness. Looking over time, we found that the first template is now archaic, and in disuse, the second has long been dominant, and the third seems to have become marginal after knowing some popularity. After

detailing our findings, we discuss their implications. We further offer some strategies for writing ethnography that deal with current positivistic pressures and, at the same time, stay true to the logic of discovery (Locke, 2011) and the complexities of the phenomenon and the research process.

Analytical Approach

Building on the sociology of knowledge and institutional theory, we view our discipline as a knowledge-producing field, and ethnography as an idea that is continuously translated as reflected in published ethnographic work. To begin with, the community of scholars associated with the study of organizations constitutes a field in which disparate actors "involve themselves with one another in an effort to develop collective understanding regarding matters that are consequential for organizational and field-level activities" (Wooten & Hoffman, 2008, p. 138). The field of OS has a "loose canon, history, identity and locale" (Augier, March, & Sullivan, 2005, p. 91) embodied in trans-organizational structures such as professional associations, conferences, and publications.

OS has developed through the adoption of theories and methodologies from neighboring disciplines (Agarwal & Hoetker, 2007). Ethnography originated in anthropology as a methodology to study non-Western, colonial communities and cultures (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Neyland, 2008) and has since made the object of intense debate (Atkinson, Coffey, Delamont, Loflan, & Lofland, 2001). It traveled into OS early in the field's development and has been part of its history ever since (Bate, 1997; Locke, 2011).

The travel of ideas – theories and methods included – involves translation, a continuous process of adoption, and adaptation to local contexts (Czarniawska & Joerges, 1996; Oswick,

Fleming, & Hanlon, 2011; Sahlin & Wedlin, 2008; Whetten, Felin, & King, 2009). Translation starts when ideas cross borders, yet it is not a discrete event. Instead, translation unfolds over time (Zilber, 2006), as ideas and the practices and structures associated with them gain (or lose) legitimacy within their new context. As texts, translations infuse objects with particular meanings, which over time become taken for granted in a specific field, so that particular possibilities and outcomes become more likely than others. Translations thus, both reflect the structures and practices of the field and, in turn, co-shape those structures and practices (Fairclough, 1992a).

Much of the activity in OS involves the production, dissemination, and consumption of texts: working papers, lectures and presentations, books, and journal articles. Especially the latter has become the "primary currency" in our discipline (de Rond & Miller, 2005, p. 322), serving as the crucial criterion for faculty's evaluation and promotion in universities (Certo, Sirmon, & Brymer, 2010; Peng & Dess, 2010). Though articles bear the names of their individual authors, they emerge in processes of collaboration within a journal's "broad community of scholars – its editors, editorial board members, ad hoc reviewers, submitters, and readers" (Palmer, 2006, p. 536). Published papers are thus a collective endeavor (Bedeian, 2004; Burgess & Shaw, 2010; Nord, 1995). They do not only reflect the research project of specific researchers, or the editorial policies of a specific journal, but also reflect the wider understandings and shared norms about what constitutes knowledge in a specific community at a specific moment in time (Abu-Saad, 2008; de Rond & Miller, 2005; Palmer, 2006).

At the same time, articles function themselves as templates, as they make wider understandings and shared norms visible in the most concrete and validated form, through publication. In practice, authors often use recently published ethnographic papers as templates of

sorts, reading them not only for the empirical descriptions and theoretical insights they offer, but also to draw lessons on how to write to enhance the likelihood that their work be published. They look for answers to questions such as: How should case and theory be balanced? How should the data be presented? How should figures, tables, and models be used to showcase rich data and theoretical insights? Although published ethnographies may not be formally acknowledged as "templates," they *de facto* often fulfil this function. Thus, it is worthwhile to explore these texts as templates, to advance the conversation about the writing of ethnography in our field, and the affordances it involves (Patriotta, 2017).

As Bate (1997, p. 1151) noted, "Ethnography can be defined in a variety of ways: as a particular type of method or fieldwork activity (the "doing" of ethnography), a kind of intellectual effort or paradigm (the "thinking"), and a narrative or rhetorical style (the "writing")". We focus here on the writing of ethnography. Writing is both a method of inquiry, allowing the author to understand what s/he has to say (Richardson, 2000), and essential for communicating these insights in a way that will engage the readers, pass the review process, and get published (Abdallah, 2018; Pollock & Bono, 2013). Writing is a dialogue between author(s) and reader(s), a social activity grounded in social norms and politics (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993). There are well-established templates of *doing* qualitative research (e.g., multiple-case method, the Gioia methodology, or process research methods; Eisenhardt, 1989; Gehman, Glaser, Eisenhardt, Gioia, Langley, & Corley, 2017; Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013; Langley, 1999). However, except for Van Maanen's seminal work (1988; Cunliffe, 2010), templates for *writing* qualitative research, and ethnography more specifically, are much less common (yet see Prasad, 2005).

We follow a stream of research focusing on the writing of science, and especially the writing of qualitative research within our discipline (e.g., Golden-Biddle, Locke, & Reay, 2006; Jonsen, Fendt, & Point, 2018; Locke & Golden-Biddle, 1997; Prasad, 2005; Reay, Zafar, Monteiro & Glaser, 2019). Our analysis focuses on the discursive construction (Fairclough, 1992a) of ethnography in articles published in ASQ as a premier North American outlet openly committed to qualitative research and to guarding its standards (e.g., Pratt, Kaplan, & Whittington, 2019). On its website, ASQ is described as follows: "Beginning with a special issue on qualitative research in 1979, ASQ set the standard for excellence in qualitative research" (ASQ website, retrieved November 11, 2019). We consider ethnographic articles published in our field's outlets to reflect and co-construct the ways in which the OS community represents and understands ethnography. Analyzing ethnographic papers "as artifacts of a scientific practice," we explore what these texts tell us "about how that practice constitutes itself" (Yanow, 2010, p. 1397) in the field over time.

Methodology

Data collection and analysis

Our inquiry developed through the following stages, involving the two authors and two research assistants:

(1) **Survey of ASQ 1956-2018**. We first manually screened each of the 1,502 papers published in print in ASQ from its beginning in 1956 until the end of 2018. We classified them as either theoretical or empirical and coded these latter as based on quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. Most papers were empirical (1,188 articles, 79%). Of them, only 230 (19%) were based on qualitative methods and 114 (10%) on mixed methods. In these latter two categories,

we identified ethnographic articles. To do so, we did not rely on self-categorization in the text, as the actual use of the term "ethnography" in published works is part of its translation within OS. Basing our classification on this term would have led to the exclusion of many ethnographic articles, as authors used a wealth of alternative labels for what Locke (2011) inclusively calls "field research."

We thus needed a working definition of ethnography to select papers for inclusion in this study beyond the level of textual, "face-value" labels. There is no widely shared definition of ethnography, and its meaning has been debated throughout its history both in anthropology and the social sciences more generally (Atkinson et al., 2001). As there is no agreed-upon set of necessary and sufficient conditions to determine whether a study is "ethnographic," we employed a "family resemblance" approach (Wittgenstein, 1958). Drawing on methodological discussions of ethnography (e.g., Bate, 1997; Cunliffe, 2010; Locke, 2011; Neyland, 2008; Pedersen & Humle, 2016; Van Maanen, 1988; Watson, 2011; Ybema, Yanow, Wels, & Kamsteeg, 2009), and following Needham's (1975) "polythetic classification," we identified a set of characteristics of ethnographic research.

Ethnographic studies are research projects that: (1) are based on fieldwork in one or more locations of naturally occurring happenings in the present moment, (2) involving participant observation, (3) for a significant time, and (4) aiming to understand the "natives'" point of view, (5) within a comprehensive, context-sensitive interpretation, (6) while the researcher is the primary research tool, so that his or her experiences and observations – as documented in a field journal and later processed – are a central source of data, (7) resulting in a text that offers a rich narrative understanding which allows for a degree of analytical generalization. For an article to be categorized by us as "ethnographic," it needed to be based on

observation of naturally occurring organizational activity (the first two characteristics), in combination with most of the other characteristics.

This family resemblance approach takes into account different versions of ethnography, as it has historically developed throughout the years (Czarniawska, 2012; Down, 2012; Van Maanen, 2006), and at the same time allows to capture the partially overlapping, defining features of ethnographic studies. It is inclusive and interpretation-based. Within the boundaries we set up, it leaves room for a "case by case" definition of ethnography.[1]

Indeed, the selection of papers to be considered as "ethnographies" and to be included in our database was a long process, involving at least two judges. As we engaged with the papers more deeply (as will be detailed below), we questioned some of our initial decisions. We resolved those hesitations or disagreements by deliberations within the research team, double-checking that our definition of ethnography was used systematically throughout the analysis. By the end of this process, we identified 104 ethnographic studies published in ASQ in the considered period. Most of the papers in our data set were solely based on qualitative data (observations but also interviews and archival data), with only six also including quantitative data (questionnaires or surveys) next to fieldwork.[2]

(2) **Detailed textual analysis**. In this phase, we conducted a detailed textual analysis of the ethnographic papers. We read a small set out of the 104 ethnographic papers, randomly selected from different periods, focusing on the textual features through which authors constructed their ethnographic account. In an emergent, inductive process, moving between the data and meta-

---

[1] All papers self-identified as ethnographies were included in our data, although two of them would not have been considered by us as ethnographies (because they lacked observation as a method of data collection). However, we included them as they were self-identified as ethnographies, and as this characterization was accepted by the reviewers and the editor who handeled the paper.

[2] As there were only six ethnographic papers classified as mixed methods, and five of them published in the very last years of our research period (after 2013), we did not treat them as a separate category.

methodological writings on ethnography and qualitative research, we came to characterize each paper by 15 descriptive dimensions. These textual features related to the theoretical context, the case and the claimed theoretical contribution, the methodological positioning and terminology, the data sources, the practices and time in the field, the references on data collection, the justification of methodological choices, the references on methodological choices, the data analysis, the references on data analysis, the epistemological reflections on the interpretative process and self-reflexivity, and the rhetoric in the text (see column 1 in Table 1). These 15 descriptive dimensions helped structure and systematize our analytical engagement with each paper. We read all articles, characterizing each on these dimensions, and recording the analysis in a table.

--- PLEASE INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE ---

(3) **Forming an analytic framework**. The tables helped us compare the ethnographic papers along the 15 dimensions and to identify patterns in similarities and differences among the articles. We observed that some aspects consistently varied together and clustered them in four analytic categories informed by the literature on ethnography and qualitative methodology: the relationship between the case and the theory, the paradigmatic assumptions (using Guba & Lincoln, 1994), reflexivity (using Johanson & Duberley, 2003), and ways of convincing (using Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993) (see column 2 in Table 1). Moving between patterns in the variation of the specific dimensions, broader analytic categories, and a more holistic appreciation of the published papers, we came to identify three distinct constructions of ethnographic writing (columns 4, 5, & 6 in Table 1). In line with an understanding of ethnography as a literary genre (Van Maanen, 1988), we used three literary genres to represent these constructions of ethnography: the travelogue (or travel writing, Siegel, 2004), the detective story (Cawelti, 1976)

11

and the post-modern detective story (Huhn, 1987). These genres are "ideal types" in Weber's terminology (Shils & Finch, 1949). In other words, each published paper did not necessarily fully fit any ideal type, yet each paper was closer to one ideal type than to the other ones (see Table 1). As the boundaries between the genres of ethnographic writing are at times blurry, at least two different readers re-read, separately, each paper, consulted the initial-analysis tables, and categorized it into one of these three literary genres. We then compared these categorizations and resolved a few disagreements through discussion.

(4) **Variations across time.** We further examined the prevalence of papers falling into each genre across time. The presence of genres across time captures their function as templates and, taken together, the evolution of ethnographic writing in our discipline over the years.

The three-fold translation of ethnography in ASQ 1956-2018

Ethnographic studies were most prevalent in the early years of ASQ. They almost disappeared in the 1970s and early 1980s but regained some appeal from the mid-1990s onwards (see Figure 1).

- - - - - - - - PLEASE INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE - - - - - - - - -

The analysis of the 104 ethnographic papers published in ASQ between 1956 and 2018 revealed heterogeneity in the translation of ethnography. We identified three translations that may be characterized by way of analogy to three literary genres: the travelogue, the detective story, and the post-modern detective story. In what follows, we present each translation-as-literary-genre comparatively, highlighting its distinctive features and drawing on multiple illustrative examples from ASQ ethnographic articles. We then chart their evolution through time to show their template status in the field of OS.

Travelogue

Eleven of the 104 identified ethnographic papers in ASQ 1956-2018 (11%) read like a travelogue. These texts are narratives of an adventure in or an exploration of foreign and exotic places, narrated as an idiosyncratic and personal journey firmly based on first-hand experience (Sigel, 2004). The credibility of the story and the author stems from personal testimony (Armstrong, 1998, p. 1047). The author-traveler is preoccupied "with observing, recording, and interpreting" his or her experience, documenting the journey "as fully and authentically as possible" (Armstrong, 1998, p. 1048). Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1835/1840) is an excellent example of this genre. The book offers de Tocqueville's observations on American society based on his first-hand experiences formed during nine months of travel and drawing on philosophical and political theories of his time.

Cressey's (1959) article titled "Contradictory directives in complex organizations: The case of the prison" exemplifies the translation of ethnography as a travelogue. From its very opening lines, the empirical settings of the study are foregrounded:[3]

"American prisons have changed from relatively simple institutions with punishment and custody as objectives to more complex organizations with difficult and contradictory goals."

Theoretically, the paper deals with contradictory directives and with how they influence employees' behavior in complex organizations. However, the theory is not discussed separately, in itself, but textually interwoven with the two specific case studies – a custodially oriented and a treatment-oriented prison – throughout the paper. Consider, for example, how Cressey uses prior research on performance measurement to interpret what is happening at the prisons he studied:

---

[3] Interestingly, one other article in this category focused on a prison, whereas others focused on psychiatric hospitals (2), research organizations (2), merchants ships, international seminars, a city commission, and a halfway house for chronic drunkenness offenders. Only one out of these 11 papers investigates a business firm.

"The use of multiple criteria in judging worker performance always makes it necessary for the employee to make judgments about committing himself to the task or tasks which have been set for him. As Ridgway has said, "Without a single over-all composite measure of performance, the individual is forced to rely on his judgment as to whether increased effort on one criterion improves overall performance, or whether there may be reduction on some other criterion which will outweigh the increase in the first" (Ridgway, 1956). The use of multiple criteria is therefore either implicitly or explicitly based on the assumption that the individual worker will commit his "efforts, attention, and resources in greater measure to those activities which promise to contribute the greatest improvement to over-all performance" (Ridgway, 1956). For maximum organizational efficiency theoretical criteria must be specified so that additional effort in one area will yield desirable results in overall performance. There are two principal systems for specifying theoretical conditions in which conformity by a worker will be evaluated as desirable overall performance, to be rewarded and encouraged. (...) However, one of the most significant things about the two prisons studied was that neither provided even theoretical criteria which guards could use in order to gain overall ratings of excellence. As indicated below, in both institutions multiple and contradictory criteria were used in such a way that it was impossible for guards to discern whether it would be profitable to commit themselves to following rules, to accomplishing a desirable end product, or to some combination of these two." (Cressey, 1959. pp. 3-4)

Cressey uses relevant theory on performance measurements, the work of bureaucratic organizations, and prior studies of prisons solely in the service of the cases, not to develop this theory further. Most of the text comprises his observations and his understanding thereof. Nowhere, not even in the discussion, does the author come back to theory, to discuss the theoretical implications of the empirical case, to reflect on theory or to refine theory given the case. Instead, the three paragraphs of the "conclusion" focus on the role of the guards in the two studied organizations:

"In both a custodially oriented prison and a treatment-oriented prison multiple and contradictory criteria were used to evaluate the performance of guards, but a system which enabled the guard to commit himself to one activity in order to improve his over-all rating was not provided. In the custodially oriented prison he had to follow rules, but he also had to violate the rules in order to keep inmates from becoming disgruntled. In the treatment-oriented prison he was to be relaxed and therapeutic in order to rehabilitate inmates, but at the same time he was expected to preserve institu tional orderliness.
    These conditions seem to be inherent in the kind of internal organization that is necessary if a prison is to achieve the multiple and somewhat contradictory goals which society sets for it. Prisons differ significantly, if not uniquely, from other organizations, because their personnel hierarchies are organized down to the because their personnel hierarchies are organized down to the lowest level for the administration of the daily activities of men.lowest level for the administration of the daily activities of men.
    The guard, who is the lowest-level worker in a prison, is also a manager. He is managed in a system of regulations and controls from above, but he also manages, by a corresponding system of regulations, the inmates who are in his charge. Essentially because he is a worker, he cannot be given full discretion to produce a desired end product such as inmate docility or inmate rehabilitation, and essentially because

he is a manager his activities cannot be bureaucratized in a set of routine procedures." (Cressey, 1050, pp. 18-19)

Similarly, other papers in this genre of ethnography stay very close to the empirical case, without attempting to develop theory from it. Concerning the methodology, much is left out. Cressey does not justify how the two prisons under study were selected, nor does he tell us much about he entered into the field, collected the data, or analyzed it. He only refers to methodological issues twice in his 19-page-long article. In note 1, he writes:

"This paper (…) is based on field research conducted between July 1955 and September 1956, when the author was attached to the Center for Education and Research in Corrections, University of Chicago." (Cressey, 1959, p. 1)

He goes further to thank his two research assistants, but the reader gets no information on their role in the study. In the body of text, only the following sentence relates to methodology:

"In the course of a year spent partly in a custodially oriented prison and partly in a treatment-oriented prison, we were able to observe these conflicting directives by studying the criteria used to evaluate the performance of guards in both systems." (Cressey, 1959, p. 3)

Given the lack of details about the methodology, the authority of the text stems from its "authenticity" (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993), from the direct observation of the field, despite the ambiguity about who actually conducted it. This (vicarious) presence is established by providing specific and detailed descriptions of the daily lives of guards in the two prisons, as well as scattered citations from written and oral organizational texts.

Other articles in this genre similarly provide only scant information about the research process, if any at all, often relegating it to a footnote.[4] In some cases, the author refers to a "full

---

[4] An exception is Anderson and Nijkerk's (1958) paper, which dedicated more than 20% of the text to methodological details, from the selection of proper cases, to the difficulty to achieve access to the fields, and the experiences of the observer. Such details and reflexive stance were absent from the other papers in the travelogue genre.

report" of the study, where more information on the methodology can be found. At the same time, the articles are clearly analytic, offering sophisticated readings of the empirical cases. Most papers, however, conclude with a very modest discussion, which remains close to the empirical data and hardly ventures into any generalizing or further theorizing. If at all present, generalizations are limited to other similar organizations (e.g., prisons), rather than used to develop existing theory on organizations more broadly.

Underpinning these articles is a positivist worldview. Observations, interviews, analysis, and interpretation are assumed to take place "as through a one-way mirror" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 110), and hence require no elaboration. Organizational reality is considered transparent, and thus accessible to "objective" observation and "objective" interpretation, as if any researcher would see the same and reach the same conclusions. This worldview is also reflected in the author's authoritative voice, which erases any trace of subjectivity from observations and understandings. It is also apparent from the occasional explanatory notes on the shortcomings of the adopted research method for exploring the 'true reality' of the studied organizations. These notes convey the authors' conviction that achieving this goal is indeed possible in principle, if not always in practice.

In sum, ethnographic papers categorized as travelogue offer a description of unique organizational cases based on the writers' first-hand experiences. The goal of these papers is to "explain" the case by the use of theory. The mere presence in the field constitutes the empirical base of the studies, and ethnography is constructed almost as an intuitive research method. Epistemologically, these papers reflect a positivist stance (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), which assumes that there is a real, unitary organizational reality that the author can fully grasp,

truthfully represent, and explain. This translation of ethnography stands in stark contrast to the second one we found, which puts theory and method at center stage.

Detective stories

The bulk of the ethnographic papers in ASQ 1956-2018 (77 out of 104, or 74%) read like detective stories. Detective novels (Cawelti, 1976) are stories of a "mysterious crime that is solved by a figure of uncommon resourcefulness" (Stevenson, 1998, p. 256). The power of the story stems from a display of "impeccable logic and reasoning in its unraveling" based on observation (Cuddon, 1991, p. 229). The protagonist of the story is a detective, "who employs rigorous logic and creative intuition" and "induces evidence by his [sic] extraordinary powers of observation" in the service of revealing the truth (Quinn, 1999, p. 83). Conan Doyle's stories of Sherlock Holmes (1887 and onward), and Agatha Christie's tales of Hercule Poirot and Miss Jane Marple (1920 and onwards) are well-known examples of this genre.

Jenkins's "Radical transformation of organizational goals" (1977) exemplifies the translation of ethnography as a detective story. The paper deals with change in organizational goals and is based on an empirical study of the National Council of Churches. Contrary to what the widely accepted conceptualizations of change at the time predicted, the author found radical change. To explain it, he offers a revised theory. While the case study receives much attention and is explored in detail (10 of the 19 pages of the paper are dedicated to it), the ambition of the paper is not to better understand the case, but rather to refine the existing theory on organizational change. This is evident from the very beginning, as expressed in the abstract:

"The recent emergence in American politics of a novel form of social-change activity, professionalized reform, is studied using the National Council of Churches as an example. Organizational growth and development is argued to have produced oligarchic rule by a professionalized staff. But contrary to Michels' classic 'iron law of oligarchy' thesis, professional staff members transformed the operative goals of the organization in a radical rather than conservative direction. A revised theory of

organizational transformation is advanced, specifying the conditions under which oligarchy emerges and supports such a radical goal transformation." (Jenkins, 1977, p. 568)

Like many of the articles classified in this literary genre, the author does not label the study as an "ethnography," but rather refers to it, in different places, as a "longitudinal study" and "case study method" based on archival data, interviews and "extensive field work" (p. 571). The methodology section is almost two pages long. It explains how the author operationalized theoretical concepts, such as "oligarchy" and "radical goals," and collected the data, and gives some contextual information about the studied organization.

Other articles translating ethnography as a detective story similarly construct the relationship between case and theory. While the case is clearly important, and the author seems to be well versed in it, it is deemed worthy only as far as it allows to make a significant contribution through theory refinement. For example, consider how Pinfield legitimizes his choice to study a senior management group in the Canadian federal government:

"an opportunity to evaluate the two perspectives and to develop a more general theory of organizational decision making was made possible when the author was seconded to a senior staff group in the Government of Canada. Here, as participant and observer, an academic had the opportunity to examine a strategic decision process from both perspectives." (1986, p. 370).

Indeed, the paper starts with a comprehensive review and a comparison between structure and anarchic perspectives on decision making. The case is used to identify the conditions under which each of these perspectives is suitable to explain organizational reality, as well as to identify their shortcomings and to offer "a partial synthesis of the two models" (p. 365). Similarly, in most papers in this genre, the choice of a specific case study is justified by its relevance for addressing a theoretical question, rather than the interest in the empirical phenomenon itself.

While all articles classified in this literary genre offer many more methodological details compared to the ethnography-as-travelogue papers, we also see a clear pattern of increasing methodological grounding and justification over time. Early articles, like Jenkins's one (1977), offer detailed data collection sections yet limited information on data analysis. For example, Lourenco and Glidewell (1975) write:

During a 15 month period in 1970-1972, the senior author was a regular participant-observer of the management and workers in a major commercial television station in one of the nation's largest cities. The junior officer was a less frequent observer, acting as a consultant in organizational development. The participant role was limited, but involved the expression of some opinions, advice, and suggestions concerning organizational problems. Observations were made of people at work. Sometimes individuals were followed through their daily work routines. At other times, all the people involved in certain settings were observed, for example, staff meetings, mobile news crews, labor-management negotiations, studio settings, problem-solving conferences, training sessions. Written notes were taken on the spot, reviewed and expanded within a day or two and subsequently typed for record. In addition, many informal interviews were held, people being encouraged to express perceptions, opinions and feelings, but not being questioned about them. Formal and informal documents were made available for analysis: the station log, contracts, orientation brochures, policy statements, some correspondence, memoranda and so forth. At the outset, persons and settings were selected on advice from management; after a few months' experience, observations were planned and made to insure coverage of representative settings and specific people in the quest for needed information. To increase trust and to reduce censoring of information, social distance between observer and observed was sometimes reduced. To gain perspective and to control personal involvement this social distance was sometimes increased." (1975, p. 491-492)

However, the same article only tells very little about how the data was analyzed:

Recorded observations, interviews and content analyses of documents were reviewed, rearranged, analyzed, and interpreted over an 18 month period with new understandings developed throughout (Lourenco & Glidewell, 1975, p. 492).

With time, we see more justification and quantification of data collection, and more elaboration on the analysis leading to the interpretation. In more recent ethnographic papers, every methodological choice—why ethnography was chosen, what kinds of interviews were used, what archive texts were collected, the method used for analysis—is grounded in previous research or commonly accepted methodological guidelines. The volume of data collected is presented by noting the pages of text, the number of interviews with individuals in various

19

categories, and the length of the observation period or hours of observations. Often, these details are also summarized in tables. Valentine (2018), for example, writes:

"Data collection involved ethnographic observation of the two learning initiatives. My formal data collection in the Navigator initiative lasted 18 months, and in the Admin initiative it lasted nine months. I spent between 10 and 30 hours a week on site, observing meetings and clinical operations and shadowing the project leads, managers, and frontline staff. (…) . By the end of the data collection, I had accumulated over 800 pages of field notes, transcripts, and archival materials. " (Valentine, 2018, pp. 577-578).

    Grodal (2018) writes:

" I conducted ethnographic observations at 26 nanotechnology conferences and networking meetings focused on the commercialization of nanotechnology primarily from 2003 to 2005 (I attended one conference in 2016). (…) From 2003 to 2005, I conducted 77 interviews. In 2016, I conducted an additional eight interviews to reaffirm my findings and ask followup questions, for a total of 85 interviews. (…) Table 1 displays the distribution of interviews among the five communities involved in the field. (…) Across the five databases, the search yielded 7,011 articles. (…) To create a representative sample of articles from each of the five datasets for qualitative analysis, I selected one article each month. If no article appeared in a focal month, I searched for articles in the following month and selected two articles if they were available. In the early years, if less than 12 articles existed for a particular year, I included all articles from that year in the analysis regardless of when they were published. Table 1 provides an overview of the complete set of archival data and the subset of 938 articles selected for indepth qualitative analysis" (Grodal, 2018, pp. 789-792)

    The procedure followed to analyze the data, including triangulation across data sources, respondents, and data analysts, is described in detail. As we approach the present time, we see more tables presenting additional data supporting the findings. Often, the authors offer quantitative measurements of the strength of their interpretations (e.g., Grodal, 2018, table 3), or counting occurrences and prevalence (DiBenigno, 2018, table 3; Lifshitz-Assaf, 2018, table 4). We also see more visualizations of the analysis and the findings in the form of "data structure" figures and models connecting key concepts. Indicatively, five of the six mixed-methods papers in our sample are in this category and were published after 2013. These increasingly detailed, quantified, and procedural methodological sections in ethnographies-as-detective-stories resemble recent developments in the genre of forensic crime fiction. Whereas the early genre of detective stories developed in tandem with forensic science (Thomas, 1999), contemporary

"forensic crime fiction," like the CSI TV series, puts even more emphasis on scientific evidence and procedures as the objective basis of the authority of the detective (Allen, 2007).

The elaborated method sections reflect a post-positivist stance (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), according to which reality does exist independent of the researcher, but cannot be perceived and comprehended directly and objectively, as human perception and cognitive function are partial and biased. Thus, it is necessary to follow a procedure that controls biases and reduces "noise." This procedure needs to be transparently reported for the author to establish the value of the findings. Indeed, more recent studies relate explicitly to issues of validity, reliability, and generalizability, all measures of research quality within a post-positivist paradigm (Amis & Silk, 2009; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These transparent and exhaustive methodological sections have become increasingly long. In purely ethnographic studies published in 2018, for example, the methodological sections amounted to at least 9% (DiBenigno, 2018; Valentine, 2018), and up to 17% of the text (Grodal, 2018). Often, the methodological sections were complemented by online appendixes offering additional methodological details and elaboration.

The post-positivist paradigmatic stance is also evident from authors' apologetic discussions of the limitations of their studies, their boundary conditions or limited generalizability, and the use of terminology typical of quantitative research. Michel (2007), for instance, cites Eisenhardt (1989) to explain her selection of the two organizations she compares:

"Selecting banks for maximum contrast on the independent variable (the banks' practices) was likely to produce more salient differences in the dependent variables, namely, organizational and bankers' cognition." (2007, p. 514)

Uzzi, who draws on "ethnographic field work" (1997, p. 35) in 23 entrepreneurial firms, offers a set of propositions and summarizes his findings in a figure of the "antecedents and consequences of embeddedness and interfirm network structure" (Figure 3, p. 62). The figure includes clear depictions of causal relations. Lifshitz-Assaf conducted both "a cross-groups

21

analysis" and "confirmatory within-group analysis" (2018, p. 753). Sutton and Hargadon

inscribe their work in the post-positivist paradigm by constructing the limitations of their work

as follows:

"The purpose of an inductive study like the one reported here is to guide and inspire new ideas, not to
validate existing ideas. The extent to which the local explanation of innovation summarized in figure 1
develops into a more general theory of technology brokering depends on how well it, or its descendants,
explains innovation in other settings. One of the first questions for future work on technology brokering
is whether or not this local model resembles innovation processes in other settings or is idiosyncratic to
the firm that we studied. The extent to which our model generalizes to other organizations can only be
determined by hypothesis-testing research in large, representative samples of other organizations
involved in creative problem solving. A variety of existing cases suggest, however, that the process we
observed at IDEO is much like that used in other organizations doing creative work" (1996, p. 745).

In sum, ethnographic papers categorized as detective stories reflect a researcher's

attempt to solve a theoretical "mystery" through induction based on a particular empirical case.

The theoretical puzzle usually stems from a theoretical gap (an unstudied area) or misfit

between a seemingly universal principle dictated by a theory and a concrete organizational

reality. Thus, the researcher needs to use insights based on the empirical case to develop or

refine theory. The empirical base of these papers is the strategic collection and analysis of data.

The role of the researcher is to restore theoretical coherence by developing theory based on

sensible and insightful, as well as systematic, inquiry into a carefully selected organizational

case. Epistemologically, these papers reflect a post-positivist stand. Reality is conceived not to

be transparent and given, and its discovery is seen to require intensive and systematic

investigation (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Post-modern detective stories

Sixteen of the 104 ethnographic papers published in ASQ 1956-2018 (15%) resemble detective

stories with a post-modern twist (Huhn, 1987). Post-modern detective stories are stories of a

heroic and moral quest, in which the protagonist does not only solve a crime but also, in the process, discovers many layers of reality (McHale, 2005) and goes through self-revelation (Cawelti, 1976). The protagonist is a rebellious detective whose strengths are tested in his or her quest to go beyond what is seen and taken-for-granted, exposing the hidden. The power of the story stems from its "rhythm of exposure" (Cawelti, 1976), the gradual understanding—of both detective and readers—of the polyphony of voices and plurality of worlds co-existing underneath what was previously perceived as a coherent, mundane reality. Post-modern detective stories are characterized by a disparity between a seemingly "regular" detective story, one that abides by the conventions of the genre, and a sub-text that actually undermines these norms (Belin Owen, 1997). Known examples are Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* (1980/1983) and Paul Auster's *New York Trilogy* (1985, 1986, 1986).

Pratt's (2000) paper "The good, the bad, and the ambivalent: Managing identification among Amway distributors," dealing with the ways organizations may manage members' identification through processes of sensebreaking and sensegiving, is an excellent example of the translation of ethnography-as-a-post-modern-detective-story. On the surface, this paper shares many characteristics of the ethnography-as-detective-story articles. The case is subordinate to the theory, as the author attempts to generate a general (albeit "preliminary," p. 481) model of identification management, presented in the main text and through a figure. The methods section is long and detailed, covering issues of data collection and data analysis, including an appendix with field journal excerpts. Validity is sought through triangulation of observations with other data sources and across different interviews (p. 461), as common within a post-positivist stance. The findings section offers a clear analytical argument, supported by a table that presents some of the interpretative codes and illustrations from the data, and a figure

"explaining different types of identification among Amway distributers via the success and failure of sensebreaking and sensegiving practices" (p. 477). In a lengthy note, Pratt (2000: 460, note 5) acknowledges that his overt presence as a researcher "may have influenced the behavior" of organizational members, but goes on to detail four "factors" that "attenuated this effect."

At the same time, however, the paper also subtly hints at a constructivist epistemological paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), one that acknowledges that social reality is multiple and collectively constructed, and assumes that the researcher and the act of research are part of this construction. Pratt (2000) does not explicate the constructivist worldview. Still, his writing creates a polyphonic text that presents multiple points of view. It highlights how the experiences and emotions of the researcher informed data collection, analysis and interpretation. In the body of the text, he provides many fragments of interviews and organizational documents, as well as vignettes from his observations. Through these citations, he conveys organization members' experiences and opinions in a very rich way. Pratt also makes use of numerous footnotes. Four of the 16 footnotes offer theoretical or empirical elaboration. Six offer alternative or additional points of view, e.g., by analyzing empirical data from a different theoretical prism, or by reporting how different people in the field viewed a particular issue. The last six footnotes reflect on the author's own experience in the field, like the following example relating to the impact of outsiders' negative images of Amway on distributors:

"I found it difficult to maintain my enthusiasm about Amway when I had to meet with my more critical academic colleagues. As a result, I found myself ignoring my academic colleagues during the most intense nine-month period of data collection. The pull between my life as an academic and a distributer was somewhat painful." (Pratt, 2000, p. 481, note 16)

In this and other similar footnotes, Pratt (2000) uses his own experiences to make sense of Amway members' experiences and to understand how Amway manages members' identification with the company. He also invites the reader to learn about the "backstage" of the research process, acknowledging its idiosyncratic nature, as the researcher's experiences, feelings, and understandings clearly informed his analysis and conclusions. For example, concerning the choice to study Amway, Pratt writes in the main text:

"I was initially drawn to study Amway because people seemed either to love or hate it: it seemed both wildly successful and unsuccessful in managing the minds and hearts of its dispersed workforce." (Pratt, 2000, p. 456)

And later on:

"Amway distributors have been found to exhibit both strong positive and negative relationships with their organization (Butterfield, 1985; Biggart, 1989), and they provided an ideal extreme case from which to build theory about identification management (Eisenhardt, 1989; Pettigrew, 1990). Extreme cases facilitate theory building because the dynamics being examined tend to be more visible than they might be in other contexts." (Pratt, 2000, p. 458)

In a footnote to the first explanation above, however, Pratt sheds light on a more personal, and apparently prior, motivation:

"My initial contact with Amway occurred when a family member became an Amway distributor. I was intrigued by how uncharacteristically enthusiastic this family member was toward the organization (see Pratt, 2000a, for details about how this family member became my sponsor). Moreover, upon doing a little initial research, I was struck by the fact that individuals tended to have either strong positive or strong negative reactions to this organization" (Pratt, 2000, p. 456, footnote 1).

Pratt also offers a candid description of the analytic process:

"After developing, exploring, and evaluating the utility of several alternative frameworks, I arrived at the one that I believed offered a strong contribution to theory without doing undue violence to my experience. It was important that my framework add to theories of organizational behavior, but I did not want my framework to unduly distort the actual experiences of Amway distributors. To help ensure that I accomplished the latter goal, I discussed and modified the framework based on conversations with key informants." (2000, p. 462)

In this and other places, he acknowledges that many different interpretations of Amway could have been possible and that the paper presented only one of them. Trying to validate it, he also checked with Amway members, thus giving priority to their subjective understanding of their reality.

Most other articles of this literary genre likewise look very similar to ethnographies-as-detective-stories, yet at the same time contain some hints that reflect a more constructivist understanding of reality and the research process.[5] Some of the papers start with an epigraph from interviews or observations, with a short description of an actual organizational event, or by thanking the participants in the studied organizations in a note, thus giving voice to organizational members at the outset. Many check their interpretation against the understandings of people in the field, thus giving primacy to these latter. Many of these papers focus, theoretically and empirically, on processes of interpretation and the social construction of reality.

Some authors extend this social constructivist understanding to the research process itself, offering a glimpse of the backstage of their research, and exposing the doubts inherent in the research process (Locke, Golden-Biddle, & Feldman, 2008). For example, relating to her intensive relations with one "key" informant, Meyerson (1994) writes:

"I began observation in Acute, where I followed a key informant (Dave), to whom I was assigned by the director of social work. (…) For a period of four months, I spent, on average, four half-days per week with Dave, observing his patient rounds and nursing-home visits and tagging along with him to seminars, parties, lunches, and staff meetings. After this period, when Dave transferred to a job at Chronic in the PW, we frequently discussed his new responsibilities and roles. I tracked closely his thoughts, feelings, and behaviors as he made the transition, and I later observed and interviewed him in his new job. Dave increasingly relied on me as a general "sounding board." and our relationship became mutually beneficial. I worried about the degree of influence we had on each other and my dual role as research instrument and social intervention. I relied heavily on other social workers in Acute and Chronic to challenge and calibrate my understandings." (1994, p. 634)

---

[5] Some of these articles (Ashcraft, 1999; Covaleski et al., 1998; Martin, Knopoff, & Beckman, 1998) are written from an explicit critical stand, which formulates a fourth-paradigmatic approach according to some classifications (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998).

Relating to his focus on the management of emotions, Sutton (1991) writes:

"The analyses focused on reviewing and summarizing evidence about how this organization sought to maintain espoused norms about emotional expression, given that collectors' expressed emotions also were shaped by their inner feelings, especially feelings about debtors. This was one of several themes that I identified in these data; I was encouraged to make it the central theme here by editorial reviews of an earlier version of this paper." (1991, p. 249)

While Sutton (1991) summarized his interpretation with the help of "display" tables, which also

indicate "the extent to which" his interpretations "were grounded in each data source" (p. 251),

differentiating between "strong" and "modest" evidence in each data source, he also notes:

"Nonetheless, as with any means of reducing and showing qualitative data in tables, these displays cannot convey the richness of these data or the nuances of the conceptual perspective. Thus, the text of this article presents data and inferences in addition to those summarized in Table 1 and 2" (p. 251-252).

Likewise, relating to that part of her analysis based on a narrative method, Ashcraft

(1999) acknowledges the constructed nature of her study. She moves between depicting

construction as a limitation to be overcome and as inherent in the nature of scientific inquiry,

especially qualitative studies:

"This method (narrative analysis) takes into account the partial, selective nature of all research and the researcher's role as narrator (Thomas, 1993); it does not imply that I did not strive for rigor and validity. I also checked my claims and evidence against two sources. (...) Importantly, qualitative methods are not merely heuristic tools in the service of objective, generalizable knowledge. They engender a different, salient form of understanding. (...) facilitate fuller awareness of context and process (Anderson, 1987; Lindlof, 1995)" (1999, p. 252).

Concluding their research method section, Covaleski, Dirsmith, Heian, and Samuel (1998)

write:

"Foucault (1983) observed that turning real lives into written texts is itself a technique of objectification and subjection. Consistent with this thesis, we found that as we shared our interpretations with our "subjects," these interpretations became part of their lived experiences (…) Academic prose also had an impact. (…) We also found our early interpretations to be only temporarily useful in understanding a fluid social context (…) Thus, our work should not be seen as an exhaustive, authoritative, passive record of an objective reality; rather, we, as well as our provisional account, are part of the social

construction of a subjective reality that may prove of limited value over time and space. Because we recognized the interplay between trustworthiness and subjectivity, in our narrative we attempted (1) to preserve many striking stories told by participants to demonstrate that our accounts represent their interpretations of their experiences, but also necessarily to bring into play our own imaginations (Van Maanen, 1988: 102; 1995); (2) to retain some modesty, in that ours are but provisional interpretations of disciplinary practices and social processes, power, and knowledge, and our narrative should be seen as "tacking back and forth between" (Van Maanen, 1988: 138) the two fluid "cultures" involved in the research-Big Six firm members and researchers; and (3) to express our interpretations as "impressions" gained from the fieldwork, which may diverge from those of other researchers (Van Maanen, 1988, 1995)" (1998, p. 307-308).

Indeed, this and many other articles of this literary genre contain numerous extracts from field notes and give quite a lively depiction of the studied organizations. Some authors also build heavily on their own experiences in the field. Sutton (1991), for example, who trained for and worked as a bill collector, relied on these experiences as a source of data informing his analysis and interpretation. Relating to socialization as one of the processes that maintain the expression of urgency in bill collectors' tone, Sutton notes the way "supervisors and experienced collectors coached newcomers to use urgency" (1991, p. 255). He then brings his own experience as an example:

"A supervisor told me that my tone was too tentative, and I had to learn to "talk like you mean business." The collector I sat with my first day on the phones scolded me (in an intense and somewhat irritated tone, of course) after I failed to get a promise to pay from a debtor: "Come on, don't be such a wimp. You've got to be more intense–where is that urgency in your voice?"
Collectors' socialization led them to internalize this norm and thus experience as well as express arousal and mild irritation. After a week of training and a week on the phones, I found that, rather than the sympathy and fear I felt at first, I reacted to most debtors with feelings of intensity and vague irritation. I heard similar assertions from experienced collectors and their supervisors" (Sutton, 1991, p. 255).

Relating to the contingent norm in the face of "friendly debtors," Sutton writes:

"For example, I called a woman who was stuck at home with a broken leg. She seemed pleased to hear from me and started chatting in a warm, friendly way about how she would get around to paying the bill soon and about how boring it was to have a broken leg. I was friendly in return and was enjoying the conversation, until the collector I was sitting with reached over, pressed the mute button, and scolded me: "You've got to get her upset! Say 'Excuse me, but don't you even care about losing your credit card? Don't you care about your credit rating?'" (1991, p. 260)

Finally, some of the authors in this category reflect upon the use of language – their own, and/or by participants in the studied organizations – and its constitutive effects. Zbaracki (1998), who studied the "rhetoric and reality" of total quality management (TQM), is very conscious of his choices of words. For instance, in the main text, he relates to the contradicting understandings and depiction of various management fads, TQM included:

"The phenomenal spread of total quality management (TQM) has generated an ironic controversy. The controversy pits TQM advocates (…) against opponents (…) The irony is that the controversy sets advocates of TQM against scholars whose expertise encompasses the very roots of TQM methods. (…) The controversy has created two competing positions and great difficulty reconciling the two. Such problems are not unique to TQM. (…) According to Astley and Zammuto (1992), organizational theorists and managers engage in separate 'language games'. Managers generate rhetoric, organizational theorists generate theory, and the two products cannot be reconciled" (Zbaracki, 1998, pp. 602-603).

In a footnote, he adds:

"I recognize that there is some legitimate dispute over the way that Astley and Zammuto (1992) have used Wittgenstein's (1958) term "language game," but I am interested in the notion of "language games" as Astley and Zammuto (1992) used the term: as stylized discourse specific to the semi-autonomous organization science and managerial communities. See Mauws and Phillips (1995) for another view of Wittgenstein's idea of language games" (Zbaracki, 1998, p. 603)

In sum, ethnographic papers categorized as post-modern detective stories are characterized by a disparity between a seemingly "regular" ethnography and a sub-text that actually undermine it. They offer a theoretical framework built on a particular self-reflexive reading of a case study involving the collection, analysis, and interpretation of empirical data. The case study, while fascinating in itself, is important above all because it enables to develop theory, by way of a systematic collection of data, systematic interpretation, and reflection. Researchers attempt to create knowledge from lived experience, while at once acknowledging that this knowledge remains context-bound and based on analytical rather than statistical generalization (Schwandt, 2001; Tsoukas, 2009). From a social constructivist paradigm (Guba & Lincoln, 1994), they posit that their research is also constructed. On the surface, ethnographies categorized as post-modern

detective stories abide by the rules of positivist writing. For example, they highlight systematic data collection and analysis as essential for generating theory from lived experience. Still, they also hint at an alternative paradigmatic stand by treating reality as multi-layered and by conveying their reflexive awareness of the limitations of such theorization. Ethnographies as post-modern detective stories are then a third and last translation of ethnography within the field of OS.[6]

Three templates of ethnographic writing over time

As indicated by the prevalence of the three translations of ethnography over the years (see figure 2), we can see that they constituted templates of writing ethnography. Their recurrence over time indicates their model function for authors writing ethnography in OS. At the same time, the prevalence of each shows important differences. Ethnography-as-detective-story has remained a template throughout most of the history of ASQ. The other two translations are more period-specific: ethnographies as travelogue were only published in the first decade of ASQ. In contrast, ethnographies as post-modern detective appear sparingly from the mid-1980s, reaching a peak at the turn of the century, yet are less numerous in the last years. This historical evolution indicates that the detective story genre has remained the dominant translation over time, providing a powerful, lasting template for ethnographies in OS, while the two other translations only temporarily functioned as templates.

- - - - - PLEASE INSERT FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE - - - - -

---

[6] Our detailed analysis of the three templates may seem uneven, as we dedicated much more space, and used many more exemplary quotations, to present the two last translations than to present the first one. The discussion of the travelogue is shorter as the papers in this category are generally much shorter, and – most importantly – do not include a detailed discussion of theory and methodology. In a sense, this genre is typified by the absence of many details that appear in later templates.

Discussion

In this paper, we examined the prevalence of ethnographic papers, and the genre in which they are written, in ASQ over more than six decades. Our study adds to the long tradition of research on writing and its disciplining in OS (e.g., Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993; Golden-Biddle, Loke, & Reay, 2006; Locke & Golden-Biddle, 1997). First, we generated unique longitudinal quantitative evidence of the published ethnographic papers allowing us to assess their (relative) prevalence and evolution over time in one top-tier, US-based, mainstream, and openly 'qualitative research-friendly' scientific outlet and, by analogy, the broader field of OS. Second, we conduct an in-depth qualitative analysis of the literary genres through which ethnography has been translated in ASQ. Third, we show how these genres have operated, in actuality, if not formally, as templates for OS papers using ethnography by pointing to their prevalence and evolution over time.

In what follows, we first reflect on the role of diversity in the prevalence of ethnographic texts and its evolution over time. We then elaborate on each of the templates, its strengths and weaknesses. Further, we discuss how these templates shape OS knowledge. Finally, we advance writing strategies that may help OS scholars using ethnography to challenge the hegemony of the ethnography-as-a-detective-story fostering heterogeneity in ethnographic writing in OS.

Only a handful of ethnographic papers, yet more at times when multiple templates are available

Despite the clear positioning of ASQ, from its origins, as embracing empirical research based on qualitative methods, ethnographic papers in the journal amount to only 9% of all the empirical papers. This relative absence, or lack "of space, in the form of page-length

31

allocation," communicates "a substantive message" (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2002, p. 468) about the relatively marginal position of ethnography in OS. This finding is in line with prior literature documenting the limited use of qualitative methods in the discipline (e.g., Bluhm, Harman, Lee, & Mitchell, 2011; Locke, 2011). Yet, at the same time, our longitudinal analysis reveals that ethnography has been present from the very origins of the field, which indicates that, despite its marginality, it always retained some legitimacy.

At two times in the examined period of 60+ years, the share of ethnographic papers reached 20% of all published empirical papers: the first years of the journal and at the turn of the century. Moreover, also recently, relatively more ethnographic papers have been published, although it is too early to know whether this is a lasting trend. Importantly, the comparison of Figure 1 and 2 reveals that both these favorable periods were characterized by the simultaneous appearance, in the journal, of ethnographic articles following one of two templates: in the early days of the journal, ethnographies-as-travelogues and ethnographies-as-detective-stories and, at the turn of the century, ethnographies-as-detective-stories and ethnographies-as-post-modern-detective-stories. Taken together, the results of our quantitative analysis thus seem to indicate that the availability of more than one template – at least two – might be a condition for increasing the number of papers based on ethnography in OS. Like diversity in theoretical explanations (Cornelissen, 2017), metatheoretical or paradigmatic positioning (Amis & Silk, 2008; Cunliffe, 2011), and methods (Bansal, Smith, & Vaara, 2018; Easterby-Smith, Golden-Biddle, & Locke, 2008), diversity in templates for writing ethnographic studies is important. Diversity signals the journal's openness, and might thus attract submissions from a broader pool of authors working from within different traditions (Prasad, 2005), who identify with, and are trained into writing differently.

Translating ethnography in OS through multiple templates

The examination of the translations of ethnography in OS across the years allowed to gain more in-depth insight into the textual features of the representations of this scientific methodology in published papers, which are so central in our community of knowledge (Derksen, 2000; Knorr Cetina, 1983; Piekkari, Welch, & Paavilainen, 2009). Different from prior research focusing on specific textual practices (e.g., Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993; Golden-Biddle, Locke, & Reay, 2006; Locke & Golden-Biddle, 1997; Reay, Zafar, Monteiro, & Glaser, 2019; Welch, Plakoyiannaki, Pickkari, & Paavilainen-Mäntymäki, 2013), our analysis reconstructed templates at the level of the whole article (see Van Maanen, 1988). The combination of a comprehensive list of inductively derived textual features and the analytical lens of literary genres has allowed us to unveil a repertoire of three templates available for ethnographic writing in our field.

The ethnography-as-detective-story template has been present throughout the history of OS and seems to become ever more dominant in recent years. Reflecting the persistent identification of OS with logical positivism (Amis & Silk, 2008; Gephart, 2004; Bort & Kieser, 2011), these ethnographic papers provide an impressive volume of data and methodological details to convey rigor in the analysis, striving to "appear like the natural sciences through quantification and thus profit from the sciences' image" (Bort & Kieser, 2011, p. 661). This endeavor is particularly crucial given the tension, in ethnography, between the avowal of the subjective and embedded nature of the methodology (Van Maanen, 1988) and the claim to the production of abstract, theoretical scientific knowledge. The prevalence of the ethnography-as-detective-story over the whole period examined likely reflects authors' continuous efforts to

abide by a scientific norm that has remained relatively stable, only accentuating expectations of adherence to it over time. The problems and limitations of such a narrow understanding of qualitative research have been widely discussed in the literature (e.g., Amis & Silk, 2008; Gephart, 2004; Bort & Kieser, 2011). Our empirical analysis contributes to these critiques by highlighting the role of multiple micro-textual features in rendering these ethnographies overly stylized, breaking complex phenomena into bite-sized abstractions, in order to lay claims to theory generation. Many of these ethnographic papers – implicitly or explicitly – attempt to chart causal relations. This is evident in the way they trade thick descriptions for abstract theoretical concepts, quantified and confined into "weak" process models, "where emphasis is placed on the change and development of existing entities", rather than "strong" process models, "where things are considered to be subordinated to and constituted by process" (Langley, 2009, p. 410), and which are more coherent with a non-positivistic understanding of qualitative research. Our analysis shows that, to comply with the request for order, authors of ethnography-as-detective-stories largely renounce ethnography's potential to explore the "ambiguities and paradoxes" characterizing organizations and how they "are created by indigenous members ... and how they are lived with" (O'Doherty & Neyland, 2019, p. 454).

The ethnography-as-travelogue template was the norm in the early days of the journal and the discipline as a whole, after World War II. It reflected the social sciences' adherence to a realist ideal that emulated the natural sciences to gain legitimacy as science within academia and the broader public (Goodrick, 2002; Prasad & Prasad, 2002). The pattern is one that elicits the use of existing theory to understand the empirical case, as opposed to the use of the empirical case to generate theory. The disavowal of the researcher's interpretative process in pursuing scientific truth in accordance with the positivist scientific ideal (Van Maanen, 1988) makes it

34

however hard to imagine today, after the so-called "interpretive turn" in the social sciences (Prasad & Prasad, 2002; Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2014), a revival of this template in OS. Still, the travelogue is helpful to denaturalize the hegemony of the post-positivist ethnographic writing. In particular, it helps to envision the recovering of a largely lost appreciation for the empirical phenomenon under study. Rather than treating the empirical phenomenon as a mere means to generate theory through "embed[ing] in dense webs of theoretical and methodological associations" (Strang & Siler, 2017, p. 546), this template may help us reclaim the importance of the empirics in all their richness and complexity. Such an appreciation constitutes the fundamental principle of ethnographic methods and qualitative research more generally (Langley & Klag, 2019).

Finally, the ethnography-as-post-modern-detective-story template appeared sparingly in the mid-1980s, peaked after the turn of the century, and is rarely used today. Ethnographies following this template seem to hit the jackpot, as they convey a double message. On the surface, they pass as legitimate scientific writing that derives novel theory from empirics. Yet, they also hint at a more critical and/or constructivist understanding of social reality that is in line with current understandings of ethnography outside our discipline (Locke, 2011). This template cautiously attempts to expand the boundaries of the detective story template by taking stock of the insights from the "crisis of representation" in anthropology and the social sciences more generally (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Marcus & Fischer, 1986). Such crisis rose vital questions not only on the practice of fieldwork and the very writing of ethnographic texts, but also the moral and intellectual authority of ethnographers themselves. The result was a diversification of approaches and multiplication of practices (Clifford & Marcus, 1986), opening the door for constructivist and post-modern perspectives (Atkinson et al., 2001).

However, these changes and dynamics affected the translation of ethnography in OS only late and – as far as we can see today – temporarily. Post-modern detective stories still adhere to the scientific norms of writing, as they resist the positivist paradigm in mostly subtle ways, from the margins of footnotes, and cursory references to alternative voices and paradigms.

These three templates of ethnographic writing are both similar and different to those Van Maanen (1988) identified based on his own experience and writing. While our templates are characterized by the different relations they construct between theory and the case, Van Maanen's (1988) three tales of the field are marked by the different balance between the role of the ethnographer and the culture s/he are exploring in the text. Realist tales focus on the culture, confessional tales focus on the ethnographer, and impressionist tales – which Van Maanen advocated – have a double focus on both (Weick, 1989). Therefore, our three templates do not neatly match Van Maanen's triad. Ethnography-as-travelogue and ethnography-as-detective-story resemble Van Maanen's realist tale, in the authoritative (internal in the former, external in the latter) voice of the ethnographer, offering objective-like understanding of the field. Ethnography-as-post-modern-detective-story is closer to Van Maanen's impressionist tale, in that the ethnographer's reflective voice is more present, if also somewhat between the lines and on the side.

Norms of knowledge production and ethnography in OS

Located in a leading, highly reputed academic outlet, ethnographic papers in ASQ provide a pattern, or model, which invites copying by others. In this sense, they literally shape other articles (see Bort & Kieser, 2011; Macdonald & Kam, 2007), disciplining the writing of scholars using ethnography in the field of OS. Ethnography has a unique ability to interest, offer

surprising insights, and expose the hidden gems and wonders of the organizational every day

(e.g. Bartunek, Rynes, & Ireland, 2006; Locke, 2011; Watson, 2011), to create "an 'Ah-ha!'

moment, in which our very basic sense of the world gets overturned or refreshed in and through

which we have occasion to see things again, as if for the first time" (O'Doherty & Neyland, 2019,

p. 454). However, as our analysis has shown, in OS we are pressured to bury all this beneath a

positivist language and style of writing. We too often are expected and consent to "mainstream"

(Pullen, 2018) the entire ethnographic agenda, making these gems and wonders invisible to the

reader. The hegemony of the detective story as a template for ethnography throughout the whole

history of ASQ points to an "inherent conservatism and normalizing effect," compelling authors

"to stick to an institutionalized genre template in order to evade the categorical imperative of

science's watchdogs" (Greenwood & Meyer 2008, p. 263, and see also Farashahi, Hafsi, &

Molz, 2005).

Ethnography is the epitome of "semantic" explanatory programs, or insights derived from

"the specific details that are provided and their contextual grounding" (Cornelissen, 2017, p.

371). Yet, as such knowledge is not recognized, we straightjacket it into syntactic and pragmatic

explanations, which are focused on results, and predicated on the belief that "scientific"

knowledge requires the ability to trace back the outcomes to their preconditions and antecedents.

Doing so, we lose the very ability of ethnography to expose experiences in their richness and the

inner dynamics of organizational processes. Paraphrasing Bechky's (2011) argument about our

theories, compared to early ethnographies within our field and contemporary ethnographies in

anthropology and other disciplines (Zanoni & Zilber, 2020), our organizational ethnographies

seem to grow more distant from the organizational activities and experiences we observe.

As our field, following top-tier North American journals, becomes ever more obsessed with the creation, extension, and testing of theory (Alvesson & Gabriel, 2013; Tourish, 2020)[7], the pressure to adapt ethnographic writing to conform to positivistic norms grows stronger. Organizational ethnographers might be disillusioned about their ability to challenge these norms. One might cynically observe that publications that critique these writing norms, their origins, and consequences in top-tier journals outnumber the empirical studies actually challenging these norms in their writing practice. While critique is fundamental to diagnose the problem, it might not be the most performative in terms of addressing it. The emphasis on the ubiquity and power of these writing conventions, while factually correct and analytically absolutely necessary, might paradoxically even *discourage* individual attempts to challenge them: not many feel as secure as David to take it up against Goliath.

Moving beyond the hegemony of ethnography-as-detective-story

Focusing on the textual features of ethnography, our analysis provides, we believe, some novel insights for developing micro-strategies that may help individual researchers better navigate the pressures on our writing. And, at the same time, push the boundaries of the conventions imposed on and internalized by us. After all, the existence of alternative templates for ethnography at specific times in the history of ASQ suggests that the writing norms constraining the production of legitimate knowledge in OS can be broadened. What, then, can be done to achieve this?

To begin with, we may educate ourselves in various genres of ethnographic writing by looking further afield. To nurture our ethnographic writing imagination, we might want to read

---

[7] Indeed, the role of theory and theory development as the ultimate goal of our field has been long a subject of debate. See most recently Tourish (2020) and the ongoing debate in *Academy of Management Learning & Education*.

more recent ethnographies in other social sciences such as anthropology, empirical philosophy, feminist sociology, and migration studies. Ethnographic works within these disciplines are redefining common understandings of the research field, reflexivity, the relation to the body, and materiality. They creatively and critically reconnect the micro- and the macro-levels of analysis (Zanoni & Zilber, 2020). They can show us alternative templates of effective ethnographic writing that can then be translated into OS to broaden our own repertoire.

Also, we need to engage with and draw more often from OS outlets that are more open to diverse research approaches. Some OS outlets, such as *Journal of Management Inquiry* (Boal & Quinn Trank, 2011; Gephart, Frayne, Boje, White, & Lawless, 2000), *Organization* (Prichard & Benschop, 2018), *Ephemera, Gender, Culture and Organization,* and *Work and Organization,* openly encourage diverse forms of expression. With the explicit aim of opening up experimentation and broadening overly "formulaic" norms of writing of regular articles, some OS journals work with dedicated sections such as Research Notes, Case Reports, but also Speaking Out, Connexions, Feminist Frontiers, Acting Up (for a historical overview and a critical discussion of the perils of this journal strategy to subvert writing norms, see Spoelstra, 2017). Despite the specificities of these alternative publication formats, we believe that ethnographers will benefit from reading more experimental texts, the kinds that "muddy the telling of a good story" prevalent in our discipline (O'Doherty & Neyland, 2019, p. 457). Be it "dirty writing" (Höpfl, 2000; Pullen & Rhodes, 2008) or "vulnerable writing" (Page, 2017), educating ourselves of more non-mainstream ways of writing may help us write differently (Richardson, 2000; Richardson & St Pierre, 2005).

Looking beyond OS and beyond regular articles in top-tier OS journal can help expand available templates. Still, this may not be sufficient, as radical innovation in ethnographic

template is unlikely to be welcomed. Our analysis of textual features of OS ethnographies could be used by individual scholars to make more conscious decisions as to what to adopt and what to adapt. Denaturalizing the templates of ethnographic writing in OS in itself helps raise awareness about their socially constructed nature, representing a vital precondition to envision alternative ones. Also, importantly, we provide empirical grounding – which makes the adverse effects of common standards of ethnographic writing visible – that can be used by authors working with ethnography to defend their different choices. Such arguments, grounded within scholarly debates and data from a highly reputable OS journal, cannot be easily dismissed by reviewers and editors during the peer-review process.

From our analysis, several strategies can be drawn to push and redraw the boundaries of the dominant template grounded in a logical positivism paradigm. These strategies recover and reinterpret, in new ways, some of the features of the other two templates previously present in ASQ and today dismissed. For instance, echoing the reference to 'published reports' providing additional information often found in ethnography-as-travelogues, one could envision the possibility to relegate the detailed description of the methodology to an appendix. This approach is practically even more feasible today than only a few years ago, given the increasingly digital nature of published articles. It of course does not eliminate the post-positivist approach to the data. Yet by confining its description to an appendix outside the main text, it does re-inscribe it as a mere means to achieve analytical and even empirical goals, a means that does not deserve to become more prominent in the text than the 'story' itself. Backgrounding the rigor in the search for order is a first step to enlarge the space for the ambiguities, contradictions, and paradoxes characterizing processes of organizing, which ethnography is so well suited to capture (O'Doherty & Neyland, 2019).

Recovering some features characterizing the travelogue can further help counter the systematic portrayal of empirical data as a mere means to generate theory. This is particularly important as relating two elements in a means-end structure establishes a clear hierarchy between them, devaluating the former compared to the latter (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969). Drawing from examples of the travelogue template, one could, for instance, introduce second, parallel reasoning in the text, which inverts this relation. So, while some parts of the text might present the case as suitable to solve a theoretical question, other ones might simultaneously focus on the case itself. As current norms of writing highlight the generalizable features of the empirical case, a simultaneous focus on this latter and its peculiar details may serve as a productive balance. More attention to those features of the case that do not fit within abstract theoretical categories may remind us of the uniqueness of each person, organizations, and process of organizing, and help contextualize abstract theoretical insights. This type of reasoning can be taken over from travelogue, where the theory is the means to solve the empirical case. Hints as to where this parallel reasoning can be placed in the text can be found in ethnographies-as-post-modern-detective stories, which often interweave reasoning grounded in different paradigms and multiple voices through footnotes or in the methodological section. Relatedly, travelogues' attention for empirical phenomena in themselves, combined with their interest for organizations beyond the firm (see note 3 above), could be recovered to address today's questions concerning the relevance of OS to the broader society (Dunne, Harney & Parker, 2008) and its so-called 'performativity' (e.g., King & Learmonth, 2015; Learmonth, Lockett & Dowd, 2012; Zanoni & Zilber, 2020). Ethnography-as-travelogue can inspire us to rebalance the relationship between theory and empirics in a way that recalibrates the kind of

produced knowledge towards a more diverse audience, beyond our scholarly community (Prichard & Benschop, 2018; Spoelstra, 2017).

Other strategies might instead draw on the features of the ethnography-as-post-modern-detective-story to better balance generativity and legitimacy. This may be achieved by a multilayered text integrating two voices. One voice would build authority through the presentation of a linear research process, well grounded in the quantity of data and its systematic collection and analysis, and offering a seemingly ordered explanation. And a second voice would reflexively expose the backstage of the study, the cyclic if not chaotic research process, and the ultimate inability to capture complex reality through clear-cut explanations. This second voice can today often be found in separate methodological and reflexive papers, dealing with the challenges of access to the field (Cunliffe & Alcadipani, 2016), the tensions around our own stories of involvement (Anteby, 2013; Langley & Klag, 2019; Wright & Wright, 2019), doubts (Locke, Golden-Biddle, & Feldman, 2008), emotions (Claus, de Rond, Howard-Grenville & Lodge, 2019; Vincett, 2018) and fantasies (Clancy & Russ, 2019), the open questions which linger all through the research process and beyond (Kelemen, Rumens, & Linh, 2019), and even the joys and perils of the writing process itself (Cloutier, 2016). Instead of relegating these aspects to separate methodological and/or reflexive papers (or worse, to one's own notebook), authors can try to incorporate them more in their research accounts, in the service of the presentation of insights, enriching the texts with alternatives and multiplicity.

As shown by our detailed analysis, there are various concrete ways authors may try to 'inject' such insights into the text. One is extensive use of footnotes to offer alternative takes on assumptions, interpretations, or voices in the main text. Using quotes from the author's field-notes also allows to show readers the backstage of the study and how experiences in the field

were later used to generate insights. Alternative interpretations alongside an authoritative interpretation add richness and better grounds the insights in the complexity of the phenomenon. This can be achieved by presenting multiple voices of people in the field, giving complementary or even conflicting accounts; by offering more than one interpretation, using multiple theoretical lenses; and by accompanying our well-crafted analytic generalizations with reflexive and cautionary remarks that contextualize the research and its conclusions. By accompanying the authoritative, semi-positivist writing with the reflexive voice of the author, and multiple voices from the field, one may manage to stay more true to a constructivist approach and the multiple realities it assumes (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

We remain aware of the great difficulties to conform to existing norms and resisting them simultaneously. Our argument is rather that, in this balancing act, features of dismissed templates that are part of the journal's tradition might come handy. In particular, imitating and citing works published in the same outlet leverages the (past) legitimacy of these templates. It can thus help to reintroduce some of their more productive features to expand how we write ethnography and thus reshape the knowledge we generate from it. Specific articles we identified as ethnographies-as-post-modern-detective-stories could be leveraged to regain more flexibility in ethnographic writing. Well-established scholars wrote many of them, and their work could likely be deployed for promoting writing that more radically departs from the conventions.

These textual strategies individual authors might use, let us be clear, are in no way substitutes for collective efforts to reclaim more heterogeneous and 'fuller' versions of ethnography. As a community, we need to ensure a more open review process of qualitative papers, for instance, by appointing dedicated qualitative journal editors and reviewers able to judge qualitative studies within their paradigmatic assumptions (Pratt, Kaplan, & Whittington,

2019). We need to organize proper training for qualitative (Rynes, 2004) and ethnographic methods (Locke, 2011). We need to keep creating spaces for the conversation around writing (e.g. Golden-Biddle & Locke, 2007). Systemic changes are needed to enable and strengthen individual efforts to challenge dominant norms. Nonetheless, our analysis has highlighted that the hegemony of templates of ethnographic writing available to us should not be taken for granted. The history of ASQ shows that norms changed over time and thus suggests that they can be changed again. Changes, however, do not happen by themselves. They require us to take action. We hope that our analysis will be used as a resource in the struggle to open up the writing of ethnography in Organization Studies.

Bibliography

Abdallah, C. (2018). Ethnography as writing. In: Mir, R., & Jain, S. (Eds.). *Routledge Companion to Qualitative Research in Organization Studies*. New York and London: Routledge, pp. 170-184.

Abu-Saad, I. (2008). Where inquiry ends: The peer review process and indigenous standpoints. *American Behavioral Scientist, 51*(12), 1902-1918.

Agarwal, R., & Hoetker, G. (2007). A Faustian bargain? The growth of management and its relationship with related disciplines. *Academy of Management Journal, 50*(6), 1304-1322.

Alacovska, A. (2015). Genre anxiety: Women travel writers' experience of work. *Sociological Review*, 63(S1), 128-143.

Allen, M. (2007). Introduction. In: M. Allen (Ed.), *Reading CSI: Crime TV under the Microscope* (pp. 3-14). New York: I.B. Tauris.

Alvesson, M., & Gabriel, Y. 2013. Beyond formulaic research: In praise of greater diversity in organizational research and publications. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 12, 245–263.

Amis, J. M., & Silk, M. L. (2008). The philosophy and politics of quality in qualitative organizational research. *Organizational Research Methods, 11*(3), 456-480.

Anderson, N., & Nijkerk, K. J. (1958). International seminars: An analysis and an evaluation. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 3*(2), 229-250.

Anteby, M. (2013). Relaxing the Taboo on Telling Our Own Stories: Upholding Professional Distance and Personal Involvement. O*rganization Science*, 24(4), 1277-1290.

Armstrong, K. A. (1998). Prose novelistic forms. In P. Schellinger (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of the novel* (pp. 1045-1049). Chicago: Fitzroy, Dearboru.

Ashcraft, K. L. (1999). Managing maternity leave: A qualitative analysis of temporary executive succession. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 44*(2), 240-280.

Atkinson, P., Coffey, A., Delamont, S., Lofland, J., & Lofland, L. (2001). Editorial introduction. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Sage handbook of ethnography* (pp. 1-7). London: Sage.

Augier, M., March, J. G., & Sullivan, B. N. (2005). Notes on the evolution of a research community: Organization studies in Anglophone North America, 1945-2000. *Organization Science, 16*(1), 85-95.

Bansal, P., Smith, W. K., & Vaara, E. (2018). New ways of seeing through qualitative research. *Academy of Management Journal*, 61(4), 1189-1195.

Bartunek, J., Rynes, S.L., & Ireland, R.D. (2006). What makes management research interesting, and why does it matter? *Academy of Management Journal*, 49(1), 9-15.

Bate, S. P. (1997). Whatever happened to organizational anthropology? A review of the field of organizational ethnography and anthropological studies. *Human Relations, 50*(9), 1147-1175.

Battilana, J., Anteby, M., & Sengul, M. (2010). The circulation of ideas across academic communities: When locals re-import exported ideas. *Organization Studies, 31*(6), 695-713.

Bechky, B. A. (2011). Making organizational theory work: Institutions, occupations, and negotiated orders. *Organization Science*, 22(5), 1157-1167.

Bedeian, A. G. (2004). Peer review and the social construction of knowledge in the management discipline. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 3*(2), 198-216.

Belin Owen, K. (1997). "The game's afoot": Predecessors and pursuits of a postmodern detective. In J. Delamater & R. Prigozy (Eds.), *Theory and practice of classical detective*

fiction. Portsmouth, NH: Greenwood.

Bluhm, D. J., Harman, W., Lee, T. W., & Mitchell, T. R. (2011). Qualitative research in management: A decade of progress. *Journal of Management Studies, 48*(8), 1866-1891.

Boal, K.B. & Quinn Trank, C. (2011). Journal of Management Inquiry at 20: Still Crazy After All These Years. Journal of Management Inquiry, 20(4), 343-348.

Bort, S., & Kieser, A. (2011). Fashion in organization theory: An empirical analysis of the diffusion of theoretical concepts. *Organization Studies, 32*(5), 655-681.

Burgess, T. F., & Shaw, N. E. (2010). Editorial board membership of management and business journals: A social network analysis study of the financial times 40. *British Journal of Management, 21*(3), 627-648.

Cambridge Dictionary (2019), https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/template, last retrieved December 18.

Cawelti, J.G. (1976). *Adventure, mystery and romance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Certo, S. T., Sirmon, D. G., & Brymer, R. A. (2010). Competition and scholarly productivity in management: Investigating changes in scholarship from 1988 to 2008. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 9*(4), 591-606.

Clancy, A. & Vince, R. (2019). Theory as Fantasy: Emotional Dimensions to Grounded Theory. *British Journal of Management*, 30(1), 203-216.

Claus, L., de Rond, M., Howard-Grenville, J., & Lodge, J. (2019). When fieldwork hurts: On the lived experience of conducting research in unsettling contexts. Research in the Sociology of Organizations, 59, 157-172 (special issue on The production of managerial knowledge and organizational theory, edited by Zilber, T.B., J.M. Amis, & J. Mair.

Clifford, J. & Marcus, G. (1986). *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Cloutier, C. (2016). How I Write: An Inquiry Into the Writing Practices of Academics. Journal of Management Inquiry, 25(1), 69-84.

Cornelissen, J. P. (2017). Preserving theoretical divergence in management research: Why the explanatory potential of qualitative research should be harnessed rather than suppressed. *Journal of Management Studies, 54*(3), 368-383.

Covaleski, M. A., Dirsmith, M. W., Heian, J. B., & Samuel, S. (1998). The calculated and the avowed: Techniques of discipline and struggles over identity in big six public accounting firms. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 43*(2), 293-327.

Cressey, D. R. (1959). Contradictory directives in complex organizations: The case of the prison. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 4*(2), 1-19.

Cuddon, J.A. (1991). *A dictionary of literary terms and literary theory*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.

Cunliffe, A.L. (2010). Retelling tales of the field in search of organizational ethnography 20 years on. *Organizational Reserach Methods*, 13(2), 224-239.

Cunliffe, A.L. & Alcadipani, R. (2016). The Politics of Access in Fieldwork: Immersion, Backstage Dramas, and Deception. *Organizational Research Methods*, 19(4), 535-561.

Czarniawska, B. (2012). Organization theory meets anthropology: A story of an encounter. *Journal of Business Anthropology, 1*(1), 118-140.

Czarniawska, B. & Joerges, B. (1996). Travels of ideas. In B. Czarniawska & G. Sevon (Eds.), *Translating organizational change* (pp. 13-48). Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.

de Rond, M., & Miller, A. N. (2005). Publish or perish: Bane or boon of academic life? *Journal of Management Inquiry, 14*(4), 321-329.

Densin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1998). *The Landscape of Qualitative Research*. Sage.

Derksen, L. (2000). Towards a sociology of measurement: The meaning of measurement error in the case of DNA profiling. *Social Studies of Science, 30*(6), 803-845.

DiBenigno, J. (2018). Anchored personalization in managing goal conflict between professional groups: The case of us army mental health care. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 63*(3), 526-569.

Down, S. (2012). A historiographical account of workplace and organizational ethnography. *Journal of Organizational Ethnography, 1*(1), 72 - 82.

Dunne, S., Harney, S. & Parker, M. (2008). Speaking Out: The Responsibilities of Management Intellectuals: A Survey. *Organization* 15(2): 271–82.

Easterby-Smith, M., Golden-Biddle, K., & Locke, K. (2008). Working with pluralism: Determining quality in qualitative research. *Organizational Research Methods, 11*(3), 419-429.

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Building theories from case study research. *Academy of Management Review*, 14, 532-550.

Fairclough, N. (1992a). *Discourse and social change*. London: Polity.

Fairclough, N. (1992b). Discourse and text: Linguistic and intertextual analysis within discourse analysis. *Discourse & Society*, 3(2), 193-217.

Farashahi, M., Hafsi, T., & Molz, R. (2005). Institutionalized norms of conducting research and social realities: A research synthesis of empirical works from 1983 to 2002. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 7*(1), 1-24.

Gehman, J., Glaser, V.L., Eisenhardt, K.M., Gioia, D., Langley, A., & Corley, K.G. (2017). Finding theory–method tit: A comparison of three qualitative approaches to theory building. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 27(3): 284-300.

Gephart, R. P. (2004). Qualitative research and the Academy of Management Journal. *Academy of Management Journal, 47*(4), 454-462.

Gephart, R., Frayne, C.A., Boje, D., White, J. & Lawless, M. (2000). Genres at Journal of Management Inquiry: Breaking frames and changing fields. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 9(3), 246-255.

Gioia, D. A., Corley, K. G., & Hamilton, A. L. (2013). Seeking qualitative rigor in inductive research notes on the Gioia methodology. Organizational Research Methods, 16, 15-31.

Golden Biddle, K., & Locke, K. (1993). Appealing work: An investigation of how ethnographic texts convince. *Organization Science, 4*(4), 595-616.

Golden-Biddle, K., & Locke, K. (2007). *Composing Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Golden-Biddle, K., Locke, K., & Reay, T. (2006). Using knowledge in management studies: An investigation of how we cite prior work. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 15*(3), 237-254.

Goodrick, E. (2002). From management as a vocation to management as a scientific activity: An institutional account of a paradigm shift. *Journal of Management, 28*(5), 649-668.

Greenwood, R., & Meyer, R. E. (2008). Influencing ideas a celebration of DiMaggio and Powell (1983). *Journal of Management Inquiry, 17*(4), 258-264.

Grey, C. (2010). Organizing studies: Publications, politics and polemic. *Organization Studies, 31*(6), 677-694.

Grodal, S. (2018). Field expansion and contraction: How communities shape social and symbolic boundaries. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 63*(4), 783-818.

Guba, E.G. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K.

Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (2007). *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge.

Hargadon, A., & Sutton, R. I. (1997). Technology brokering and innovation in a product development firm. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 42*(4), 716-749.

Harley, B. (2015). The one best way? "Scientific" research on HRM and the threat to critical scholarship. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 25(4), 399-407.

Höpfl, H. 2000. The suffering mother and the miserable son, organizing women and organizing women's writing. *Gender, Work and Organization*, 7(2), 98–105.

Huhn, P. (1987). The detective as reader: Narrativity and reading concepts in detective fiction. *Modern Fiction Studies, 33*(3), 451-466.

Jenkins, J. C. (1977). Radical transformation of organizational goals. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 22*(4), 568-586.

Johanson, P. & Duberley, J. (2003). Reflexivity in management research. Journal of management Studies, 40(5): 1279-1303

Jonsen, K., Fendt, J., & Point, S. (2018). Convincing qualitative research: What constitutes persuasive writing? *Organizational Research Methods, 21*(1), 30-67.

Kelemen, M., Rumens, N., & Linh, C.V. (2019). Questioning and Organization Studies. Organization Studies, 40(10), 1529-1542.

King, D., & Learmonth, M. (2015). Can critical management studies ever be 'practical'? A case study in engaged scholarship. *Human Relations 68*(3): 353–375.

Knorr-Cetina, K.D. (1983). The ethnographic study of scientific work: Towards a constructivist interpretation of science. In K. D. Knorr-Cetina, M. Mulkay & (Eds.), *Science observed: Perspectives on the social study of science* (pp. 115-140). London: Sage.

Langley, A. (1999). Strategies for theorizing from process data. *Academy of Management Review*, 24, 691-710.

Langley, A. (2009). Studying processes in and around organizations. In D. A. Buchanan & A. Bryman (Eds.), *The sage handbook of organizational research methods* (pp. 409-429). London: Sage.

Langley, A., & Klag, M. (2019). Being where? Navigating the involvement paradox in qualitative research accounts. *Organizational Research Methods*, 22(2), 515-538.

Learmonth, M., Lockett, A. & Dowd, K. (2012). Towards scholarship that matters: The usefulness of useless research and the uselessness of useful research. *British Journal of Management 23*(1): 35–44

Lifshitz-Assaf, H. (2018). Dismantling knowledge boundaries at nasa: The critical role of professional identity in open innovation. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 63*(4), 746-782.

Lincoln, Y.S., & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Locke, K. (2011). Field research practice in management and organization studies: Reclaiming its tradition of discovery. *Academy of Management Annals, 5*, 613-652.

Locke, K., & Golden-Biddle, K. (1997). Constructing opportunities for contribution: Structuring intertextual coherence and "problematizing" in organizational studies. *Academy of Management Journal, 40*(5), 1023-1062.

Locke, K., Golden-Biddle, K., & Feldman, M. S. (2008). Making doubt generative: Rethinking the role of doubt in the research process. *Organization Science, 19*(6), 907-918.

Lourenco, S. V., & Glidewell, J. C. (1975). Dialectical analysis of organizational conflict.

Administrative Science Quarterly, 20(4), 489-508.

Macdonald, S., & Kam, J. (2007). Ring a ring o' roses: Quality journals and gamesmanship in management studies. *Journal of Management Studies, 44*(4), 640-655.

Marcus, G.E. & Fischer, M.M.I. (1986). Anthropology as Cultural Critique: An Experimental Moment in the Human Sciences. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.

Martin, J., Knopoff, K., & Beckman, C. (1998). An alternative to bureaucratic impersonality and emotional labor: Bounded emotionality at the Body Shop. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 43*(2), 429-469.

McHale, B. (2005). Postmodern narrative. In A. Herman, M. Jahn & M. L. Ryan (Eds.), *Routledge encyclopedia of narrative theory* (pp. 456-460). New York: Routledge.

Meyerson, D. E. (1994). Interpretations of stress in institutions: The cultural production of ambiguity and burnout. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 39*(4), 628-653.

Michel, A. A. (2007). A distributed cognition perspective on newcomers' change processes: The management of cognitive uncertainty in two investment banks. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 52*(4), 507-557.

Needham, R. (1975). Polythetic classification: Convergence and consequences. *Man, 10*(3), 349-369.

Neyland, D. (2008). *Organizational ethnography*. London, UK: Sage.

Nord, W. (1995). Looking at ourselves as we look at others: An exploration of the publication system for organization research. In L. L. Cummings & P. Frost (Eds.), *Publishing in the organization sciences* (pp. 76-88). Homewood, Ill: Irwin.

O'Doherty, D. & Neyland, D. (2019). The developments in ethnographic studies of organizing: Towards objects of ignorance and objects of concern. *Organization*, 26(4): 449-469.

Organization (2019). See https://journals.sagepub.com/author-instructions/ORG (last retrieved December 14th, 2019).

Oswick, C., Fleming, P., & Hanlon, G. (2011). From borrowing to blending: Rethinking the processes of organizational theory building. *Academy of Management Review, 36*(2), 318-337.

Page, T. (2017). Vulnerable writing as a feminist methodological practice. *Feminist Review* 115: 13-29.

Palmer, D. (2006). Taking stock of the criteria we use to evaluate one another's work: ASQ 50 years out. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 51*(4), 535-559.

Patriotta, G. (2017). Crafting papers for publication: Novelty and convention in academic writing. *Journal of Management Studies, 54*(5), 747-759.

Pedersen, A.R. & Humle, D.M. (Eds.). (2016). *Doing organizational ethnography*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Perelman, C. & Olbrechts-Tyteca, L. (1969). *The new rhetoric: A treatise on argumentation*. London: University of Notre Dame Press.

Peng, M. W., & Dess, G. G. (2010). In the spirit of scholarship. *Academy of Management Learning & Education, 9*(2), 282-298.

Piekkari, R., Welch, C., & Paavilainen, E. (2009). The case study as disciplinary convention: Evidence from international business journals. *Organizational Research Methods, 12*(3), 567-589.

Pinfield, L. T. (1986). A field-evaluation of perspectives on organizational decision-making. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 31*(3), 365-388.

Podsakoff, P. M., Mackenzie, S. B., Bachrach, D. G., & Podsakoff, N. P. (2005). The influence

of management journals in the 1980s and 1990s. *Strategic Management Journal, 26*(5), 473-488.

Pollock, T. G., & Bono, J. E. (2013). Being scheherazade: The importance of storytelling in academic writing. *Academy of Management Journal, 56*(3), 629-634.

Prasad, A., & Prasad, P. (2002). The coming age of interpretive organizational research. Organizational Research Methods, 5(1), 4-11.

Prasad, P. (2005). *Crafting qualitative research: Working in the post-positivist traditions*. London: Routledge.

Pratt, M. G. (2000). The good, the bad, and the ambivalent: Managing identification among Amway distributors. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 45*(3), 456-493.

Pratt, M.G., Kaplan, S., & Whittington, R. (2019). Editorial essay: The tumult over transparency: Decoupling transparency from replication in establishing trustworthy qualitative research. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 65(1), 1-19.

Prichard, C., & Benschop, Y. (2018). It's time for acting up! *Organization*, 25(1): 98–105.

Pullen, A. (2018). Writing as labiaplasty. *Organization*, 25(1): 123-130.

Pullen, A. & Rhodes, C. (2008). Dirty Writing. *Culture and Organization*, 14(3), 241–259.

Quinn, E. (1999). *A dictionary of literary and thematic terms*. New York: Facts on File.

Reay, T., Zafar, A., Monteiro, P., & Glaser, V. (2019). Presenting Findings from Qualitative Research: One Size Does Not Fit All! *Research in the Sociology of Organizations, 59:* 201-216.

Richardson, L (2000). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds.). Handbook of Qualitative Research. Thousand oaks, CA: Sage, 923-948.

Richardson, L., & St. Pierre, E. A. (2005). Writing: A Method of Inquiry. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research. Sage,* 959–978.

Ricoeur, P., (1981), The hermeneutical function of distanciation, in B. J. Thompson (ed.), *Hermeneutics and Social Sciences: Essays on Language, Action and Interpretation*, (pp. 131–144). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rynes, S. (2004). Editor's note. *Academy of Management Journal, 47*(4), 454.

Sahlin, K. & Wedlin, L. (2008). Circulating ideas: Imitation, translation and editing. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, K. Sahlin-Andersson & R. Suddaby (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of organizational institutionalism* (pp. 218-242). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schwandt, T.A. (2001). *Dictionary of qualitative inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Schwartz-Shea, P., & Yanow, D. (2002). "Reading" "methods" "texts": How research methods texts construct political science. *Political Research Quarterly, 55*(2), 457-486.

Shils, E. & Finch, H. A. (Eds.). (1949). *Max Weber on the methodology of the social sciences*. New York: Free Press.

Siegel, K. (Ed.). (2004). *Gender, genre and identity in women's travel writing*. New York: P. Lang.

Spoelstra, S. (2017). A note on notes: On the rise of 'special sections' in academic journals. *Ephemera*, 17, 609-618.

Stevenson, J.A. (1998). Crime, detective, and mystery novel. In P. Schellinger (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of the novel* (pp. 256-259). Chicago: Fitzroy, Dearboru.

Strang, D. & Siler, K. (2017). From "just the facts' to "more theory and methods, please': The evolution of the research article in Administrative Science Quarterly, 1956-2008. *Social Studies of Science, 47*(4), 528-555.

Sutton, R. I. (1991). Maintaining norms about expressed emotions: The case of bill collectors.

Administrative Science Quarterly, 36(2), 245-268.

Sutton, R. I., & Hargadon, A. (1996). Brainstorming groups in context: Effectiveness in a product design firm. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 41*(4), 685-718.

Thomas, R.R. (1999). *Detective fiction and the rise of forensic science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tsoukas, H. (2009). Craving for generality and small-n studies: A Wittgensteinian approach towards the epistemology of the particular in organization and management studies. In D. A. Buchanan & A. Bryman (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of organizational research methods* (pp. 285–301). Los Angeles: Sage.

Tourish, D. (2020). The triumph of nonsense in management studies. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 19(1), 99-109.

Üsdiken, B. (2014). Centres and peripheries: Research styles and publication patterns in 'top' US journals and their European alternatives, 1960-2010, *Journal of Management Studies*, 51(5): 764-789.

Uzzi, B. (1997). Social structure and competition in interfirm networks: The paradox of embeddedness. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 42*(1), 35-67.

Valentine, M. A. (2018). Renegotiating spheres of obligation: The role of hierarchy in organizational learning. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 63*(3), 570-606.

Van Maanen, J. (1979). Reclaiming qualitative methods for organizational research: A preface. Administrative Science Quarterly, 24(4): 520-526.

Van Maanen, J. (1988). *Tales of the field: On writing ethnography*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Van Maanen, J. (2006). Ethnography then and now. *Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management: An International Journal, 1*(1), 13-21.

Vincett, J. (2018). Researcher self-care in organizational ethnography: Lessons from overcoming compassion fatigue. *Journal of Organizational Ethnography*, 7(1), 44-58.

Watson, T. J. (2011). Ethnography, reality, and truth: The vital need for studies of 'how things work' in organizations and management. *Journal of Management Studies, 48*(1), 202-217.

Weick, K.E. (1989). Reviewe of Tales of the field: On writing ethnography, by John Van Maanen. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 34(2), 307-311.

Welch, C., Plakoyiannaki, E., Piekkari, R., & Paavilainen-Mantymaki, E. (2013). Legitimizing diverse uses for qualitative research: A rhetorical analysis of two management journals. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 15*(2), 245-264.

Whetten, D. A., Felin, T., & King, B. G. (2009). The practice of theory borrowing in organizational studies: Current issues and future directions. *Journal of Management, 35*(3), 537-563.

Wittgenstein, L. (1958). *Philosophical investigations*: Blackwell.

Wright, L. & Wright, C. (2019). When research and personal lifeworlds collide. 59, 255-274 (special issue on The production of managerial knowledge and organizational theory, edited by Zilber, T.B., J.M. Amis, & J. Mair.

Wooten, M. & Hoffman, A.J. (2008). Organizational fields: Past, present and future. In R. Greenwood, C. Oliver, K. Sahlin-Andersson & R. Suddaby (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of organizational institutionalism* (pp. 130-147). Los Angeles: Sage.

Yanow, D. (2010). Studying organizations ethnographically: Is 'organizational' ethnography distinctive? *Organization Studies*, 31(9-10), 1397-1410.

Yanow, D. & Schwartz-Shea, P. eds. (2014). Interpretation and Method: Empirical Research

Methods and the Interpretive Turn. London: Routledge.

Ybema, S., Yanow, D., Wels, H., & Kamsteeg, F. (Eds.). (2009). *Organizational ethnography: Studying the complexities of everyday life*. London, UK: Sage.

Zanoni, P. & Zilber, T.B. (2020). What are we missing? Exploring ethnographic possibilities beyond OS conventions. In: Mir, R., & Fayard, A.L. (Eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Anthropology in Management*. Routledge.

Zbaracki, M. J. (1998). The rhetoric and reality of total quality management. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 43*(3), 602-636.

Zilber, T.B. (2006). The work of the symbolic in institutional processes: Translations of rational myths in Israeli high tech. *Academy of Management Journal, 49*(2), 281-303.

Figure 1. Porportion of Ethnographic papers out of all empirical papers (4 year moving average)
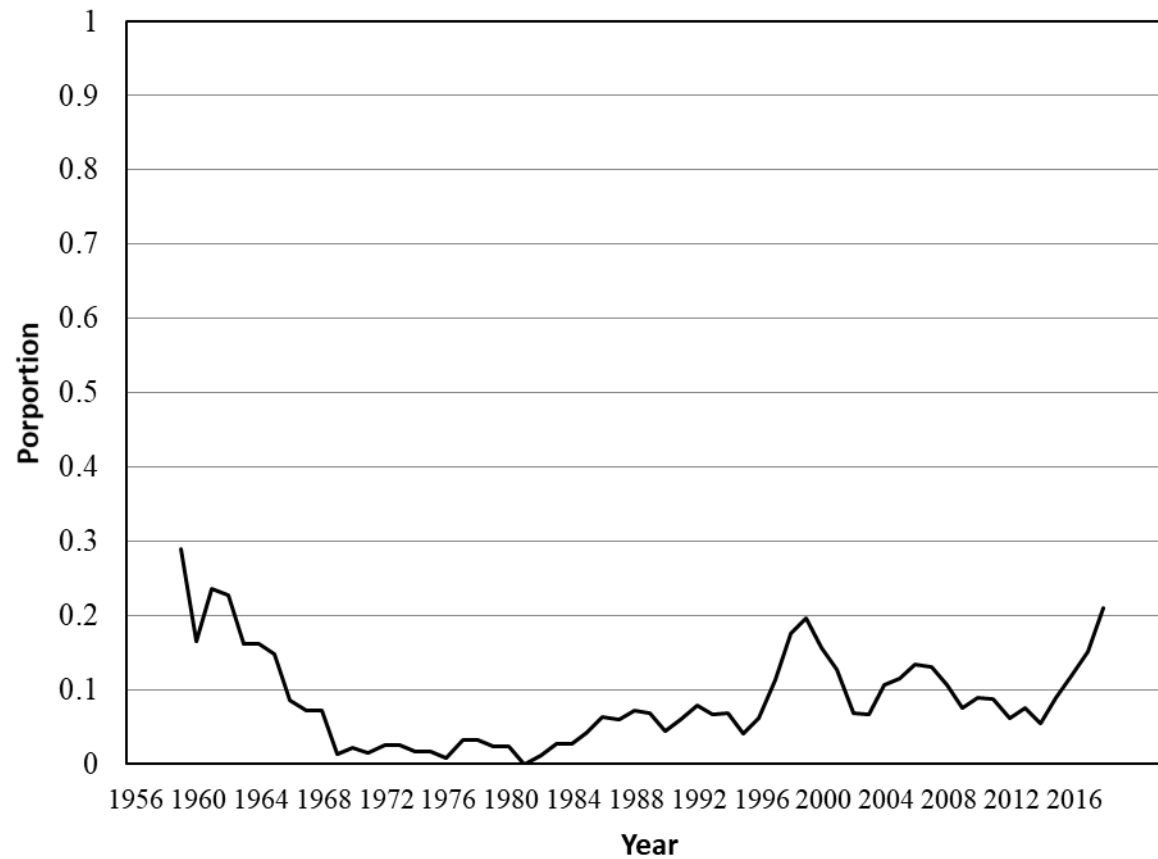
Figure 2. Proportion of Ethnographic papers out of all empirical papers (4 year moving average)

Porportion

Year

•••• Travelogue   —— Detective story   – – Postmoderns detective story
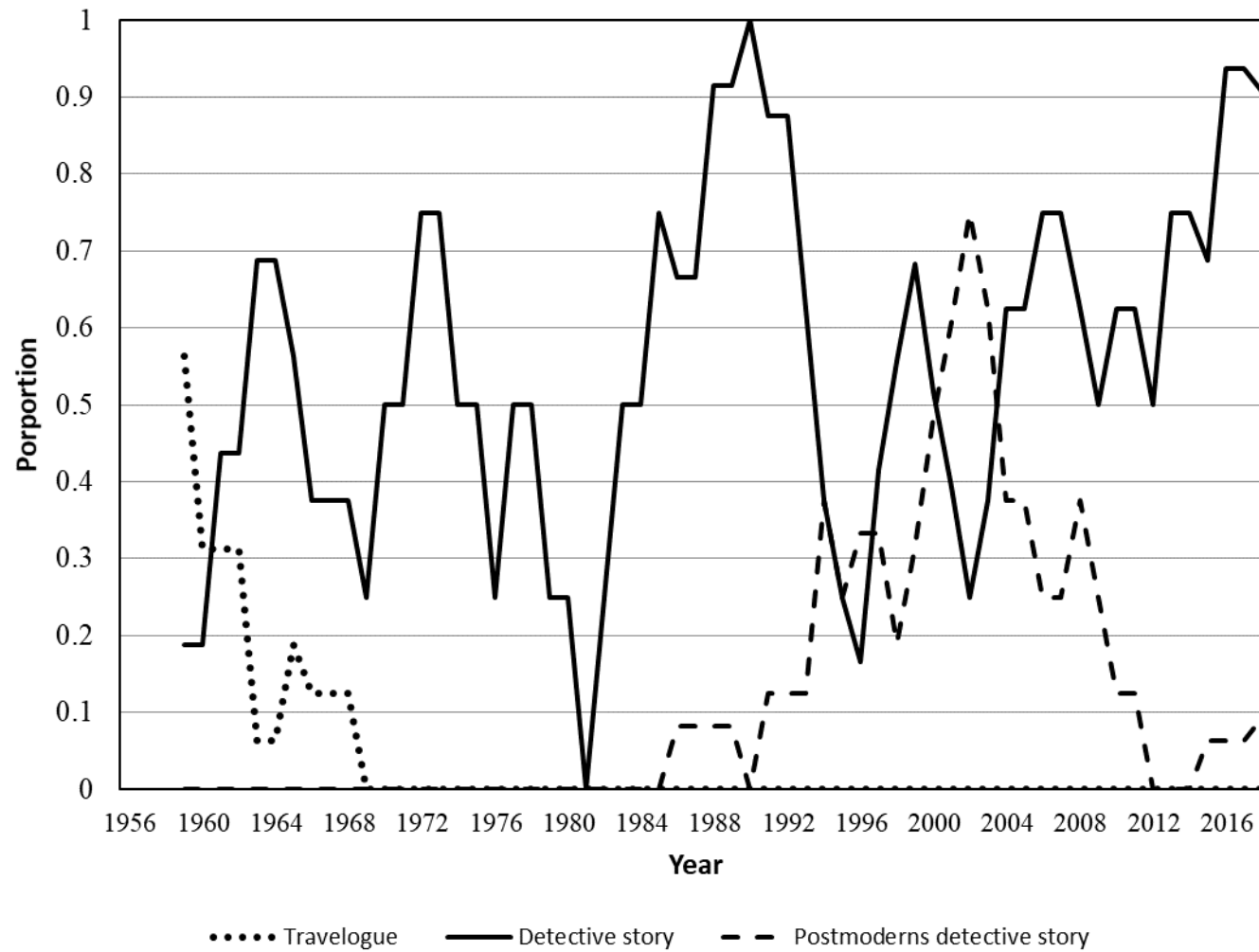
Table 1
Textual markers (descriptive and analytic) of the three templates of ethnographic writing

Column 1	Column 2	Column 3 Ethnography as Travelogue	Column 4 Ethnography as Detective Story	Column 5 Ethnography as a Post-Modern Detective Story
Descriptive dimensions	**Analytic categories**			
1. Theoretical context 2. Case 3. Claimed theoretical contribution	Relation between case and theory	Use of theory to illuminate a particular case	Use of tension between the case and theory to refine theory	Use of case to develop theory
4. Methodological positioning and terminology 5. Data sources 6. Practices in the field 7. Time in the field 8. References on data collected 9. Justification of methodological choices 10. References to methodological justifications 11. Analysis 12. References on analysis	Paradigmatic assumptions (ontology, epistemology and methodology, Guba & Lincoln, 1994)	No methodology section, the empirical base of the paper stems from the author having been in the field. Positivist (objective depiction of reality)	Detailed methodology section, early on mainly on data collection, later on data analysis as well. Empirically, the paper is built on systematic collection of data and later on also systematic analysis. Post-positivist	Detailed methodology section. Empirically, the paper is built on systematic collection and systematic interpretation of data, as well as reflection. Constructivist
13. Epistemological observations on the field 14. Epistemological reflections on the author's	Reflexivity (Johnson & Duberley, 2003)	"[T]ruth, as correspondence, is to be found in the observer's passive registration of facts that constitute reality" (p. 1282).	Analysis of the researcher's behaviours to erase methodological lapses. The researcher is a sceptical expert.	Author takes the position of a discourse deconstructed, based upon duality of awareness (the author is aware that s/he too is presenting a constructed

55

				world).
interpretative process and self reflectivity		None	Methodological reflexivity: "nurture and sustain objectivity" (p. 1293).	Deconstructive reflexivity: "display and overturn constructive processes so as to invoke temporary alternative voices" (p. 1293).
15. Text rhetoric[1]	Convincing (Golden-Biddle & Locke, 1993)	Mainly through authenticity conveying "the vitality of everyday life encountered by the researcher in the field setting…. Having 'been there'… having first-hand experience" (p. 599).[2]	Mainly through plausibility dealing with "common concerns, establishing its connection to the personal and disciplinary backgrounds and experiences of the readers." While affirming "its distinctive research contribution to a disciplinary area" (p. 600).	Mainly through criticality "the ability of the text to actively probe readers to reconsider their taken-for-granted ideas and beliefs… provides a cultural critique of the assumptions underlying the prevailing theories and lines of thought in OS" (p. 600). The author will create spaces in the text which invite the reader to reflect on the findings.
		One voice. Omniscient first-person account.	Multiple voices of people in the field in service of author's voice Omniscient third-person account.	Polyphony of voices (people in the field, ambivalent author). Non-omniscient first-person account.

---

[1] This dimension is more abstract and holistic than the other ones.

[2] According to Golden-Biddle and Locke (1993), authenticity also includes "being genuine to that experience. That is, the text conveys that the researchers grasped and understood the members' world as much as possible according to the members' constructions of it" (p. 599). However, in "travelogues", we detected neither awareness of constructions nor commitment to the points of view of people in the field.

Table 2
List of 104 ASQ ethnographic articles and their classification

Ethnography as Travelogue (11)	Ethnography as Detective Story (77)			Ethnography as Post-modern Detective Story (16)
McEwen 1956	Cyert, Dill & March 1958	Adler & Adler 1988	Michel 2007	Ritti & Silver 1986
Richardson 1956	Dill 1958	Smith 1989	Weber, Heinze & DeSoucey 2008	Sutton 1991
Caudill 1956	Robinson 1958	Barley 1990	Lingo & O'Mahony 2010	Meyerson 1994
Rankin 1956	Carlson 1961	Boje 1991	Clark, Gioia, Ketchen & Thomas 2010	Fine 1996
Anderson & Nijkerk 1958	Haines, Heider & Remington 1961	Larson 1992	Anteby 2010	Covaleski, Dirsmith, Heian & Samuel 1998
Cressey 1959	Hawkes 1961	Pentland 1992	Michel, 2011	Martin, Knopoff & Beckman, 1998
Grusky 1959	Presthus 1961	Sackmann 1992	McPherson & Sauder, 2013	Zbaracki 1998
Kapln 1959	Peabody 1962	Barley 1996	DiBenigno & Kellogg, 2014	Ashcraft 1999
Staruss 1962*	Scheff 1962	Sutton & Hargadon 1996	Ashforth & Reingen, 2014*	Pratt 2000
Maniha & Perrow 1965	Zald 1962	Bradach 1997	Tan, 2015	Ely & Thomas 2001
Rubington 1965	Price 1963	Hargadon & Sutton 1997	Huising, 2015	Huy 2002
	Cangelosi & Dill 1965	Jehn 1997	Huang & Pearce, 2015*	Baker & Nelson 2005
	Smith 1965	Nelsen & Barley 1997	Nigam, Huising, & Golden, 2016	Klein, Ziegret, Knight & Xiao 2006
	Burack 1967	Uzzi 1997	Truelove & Kellogg, 2016	O'Mahony & Bechky 2008
	Delany & Finegold 1970	Oakes, Townley & Cooper 1998	Young-Hyman, 2017*	Lawrence & Dover, 2015
	Peterson & Berger 1971	Perlow 1998	Rogers, Corley, & Ashforth, 2017	Bechky & Chung, 2018
	Reeves and Turner 1972	Warhurst 1998	Fayard, Stigliani, & Bechky, 2017	
	Lourenco & Glidewell 1975	Fox-Wolfgramm, Boal & Hunt 1998	Hatch & Schultz, 2017	
	Jenkins 1977	Perlow 1999	Salvato & Rerup, 2018	
	Sebring 1977	Miner, Bassoff & Moorman 2001	DiBenigno, 2018	
	Meyer 1982	Elsbach 2003	Valentine, 2018	
	Burgelman 1983	Evans, Kunda & Barley 2004	Ranganathan, 2018*	
	Wiewel & Hunter 1985	Corley & Gioia 2004	Lifshitz-Assaf, 2018	
	Barley 1986	Ericksen & Dyer 2004	Grodal, 2018	
	Pinfield 1986	Obstfeld 2005	Ranganathan, 2018*	
	Finlay 1987	Osterman 2006		

* Mixed methods